

Sight & Sound

The Film Monthly

January

1/6



THOROLD DICKINSON

RICHARD WINNINGTON

RENE CLAIR

PHILIP HOPE-WALLACE

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

20th CENTURY-FOX for *All about Eve*.

RKO RADIO for *Wagonmaster*.

METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER for *On the Town*, *Intruder in the Dust*.

UNITED ARTISTS for picture of Stanley Kramer.

NATIONAL FILM LIBRARY for *The Lodger*, *Paradiso Perduto*, *Allegoria di Primavera*.

BRITISH LION for *Happiest Days of Your Life*, *Chance of a Lifetime*.

THOROLD DICKINSON, JOHN HOWELL and A.B.P.C. for *The Mayor of Casterbridge*.

EROS FILMS for *Letter from an Unknown Woman*.

FILM TRADERS for *Domenica d'Agosto*.

FILMS DE FRANCE for *Orphée*.

UNIFRANCE FILM and SAM LEVIN for picture of Cocteau.

COLIN LESSLIE for *No Resting Place*.

ENIC, ROME for *Miracolo a Milano*.

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Sight & Sound

Published by the British Film Institute

VOLUME 19 (New Series) No. 9

JANUARY 1951

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ON THE COVER: Joanne Dru in *Wagonmaster* (see "The Front Page")

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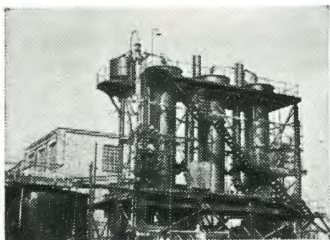
FILMS *of an Industry*

Of all modern industries, few are so important in the life of the nation as the chemical industry—and certainly none is so complex.

In order to explain its own part in the industry, I.C.I. recently began the production of a series of documentary films. While primarily intended for I.C.I. employees, they may well interest other audiences, such as universities, schools and scientific societies.

The films can be borrowed on the usual free-loan library conditions. The following are available now, and further films, at present in production, will be announced when ready.

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The Front Page



A Handful of Oscars

THE PRIVATE OSCAR SEASON is now in full swing, and the temptation to join in cannot be resisted. Here, for the record, is SIGHT AND SOUND's retrospect of 1950. It has been limited, for the sake of fairness, to films publicly shown in Britain last year, which obliges us to leave out a good many seen at festivals.

Outstanding Films :—

Orphée (Cocteau, France)
La Beauté du Diable (René Clair, France)
Les Parents Terribles (Cocteau, France)
Sylvie et le Fantôme (Autant-Lara, France)
Intruder in the Dust (Clarence Brown, William Faulkner, U.S.A.)
The Men (Kramer, Zinnemann, Foreman, U.S.A.)
Wagonmaster (John Ford, U.S.A.)
On the Town (Gene Kelly, Stanley Donen, U.S.A.)
Sunset Boulevard (Wilder and Brackett, U.S.A.)
Letter From an Unknown Woman (Ophuls, Howard Koch, U.S.A.)
She Wore a Yellow Ribbon (John Ford, U.S.A.)
Cinderella (Disney, U.S.A.)
Seven Days to Noon (Boulting Brothers, Britain)
Chance of a Lifetime (Bernard Miles, Alan Osbiston, Britain)

The list, it need hardly be stressed, is a personal one. At the point where enjoyment takes over from analytical appreciation, one can only fall back on personal taste, and the most violent disagreements begin to occur. One reflection occasioned by the list is how few of the best Italian films, apart from private showings, have reached this country. We are still waiting for Castellani's *E Primavera* and Visconti's *La Terra Trema*, to name only the two most outstanding.



Top Left: Alice Pearce, Ann Miller, Betty Garrett, Frank Sinatra, Jules Munshin, Gene Kelly, in "On the Town."

Top Right: Claude Jarman Jnr., Elizabeth Patterson in "Intruder in the Dust."

Below Left: Maria Casares, Jean Cocteau and Marie Dea at the Venice Festival.

Below Right: Carl Foreman and Stanley Kramer on the set of "The Men."





Alastair Sim



Joan Fontaine



Francois Perier

Outstanding Performances :—

Bette Davis in *All About Eve*: Maria Casarès in *Orphée*: Barbara Bel Geddes in *Panic in the Streets*: Anna Magnani in *The Miracle*: Yvonne de Bray in *Les Parents Terribles*: Joan Fontaine in *Letter From an Unknown Woman*. François Périer in *Orphée* and *Sylvie et le Fantôme*: Michel Simon in *La Beauté du Diable*: Alastair Sim in *The Happiest Days of Your Life*: Marlon Brando in *The Men*: William Holden in *Sunset Boulevard*: Jose Ferrer in *Crisis*.

There are other things that should not be forgotten. Some films were in part as good as several of those listed above, though they did not measure up as a whole. John Huston's *The Asphalt Jungle*, with its gripping first hour or so: the scenes of mob violence in *The Dividing Line*: the skill of Castellani with *Mio Figlio Professore*: the last two reels of *Jour de Fête*: some tensely written scenes in *Crisis*, and in *Twelve o'Clock High*: Mankiewicz's *All About Eve*, with enough wit anyway for half its length (140 minutes): much of *Occupe-Toi d'Amélie*: the opening sequences of *Kuksi (Somewhere in Europe)*: the idea, if not the execution, of *The Miracle*: Borzage's direction of *Moonrise*.

If special awards were to be made to any single directors, they would go to the two most widely different in the world: to Cocteau for his extraordinary versatility and imagination, and to the undaunted John Ford, whose 1950 Westerns are unrivalled for breadth and spaciousness.

Among short films this year, one remembers particularly Humphrey Jennings' last film, *Family Portrait*, made for the Festival of Britain: Paul Dickson's *The Undefeated*: This Modern Age's *The True Face of Japan*: Norman MacLaren's delightful *Begone Dull Care*, at last given public showings: and the first work of a new American cartoon group, whose endearing character, the short-sighted Mr. Magoo, can be seen at his best in *Ragtime Bear*.

At the end of 1949 there were two films at the top of nearly everybody's list—*Bicycle Thieves* and *Louisiana Story*. No films this year have brought an equivalent humanity to the cinema, and the revivals of *City Lights* and *All Quiet on the Western Front* remind us of it.

A good many of this year's palms are again held by America, which has kept up its record of liveliness, wide range of subject, topicality and fine technique. The American cinema is perhaps the most extreme example of taking the best with the worst. The latter comes out on one level with the deceptive glibness of some of the other "racial" films, and on a crude one with

uniquely disagreeable films like *Night and the City* and *Kiss Tomorrow Goodbye*.

The Americans, nevertheless, have made a more determined attempt than most film-makers to approach contemporary problems. (Part of the appeal of *Seven Days to Noon* and *Chance of a Lifetime* undoubtedly lies in their awareness of contemporary issues, rarely enough reflected in British films.) It is perhaps significant that the film of 1950 which comes nearest to all-round perfection is *Orphée*, leading us as it does to the far regions of a private world.

Ultimatum

In the November issue of SIGHT AND SOUND we announced a ballot, the object of which was to secure the revival of a film the majority of readers would most like to see again. We asked readers to write the names of their suggested films on post-cards, and to send them to SIGHT AND SOUND, which would then attempt to bring about the reissue of the film with the most votes. To date, the response has not been sufficient to encourage us to make any approach to a distributing company. Unless during the current month we receive considerably more suggestions, we shall, regretfully, have to abandon the project.

Plumbing the Artist

IN A RECENT NUMBER of *British Kinematography*, Sir Robert Watson-Watt reproaches SIGHT AND SOUND for its strictures on some of the claims of Operational Research. This is an ancient issue, but one dislikes being misunderstood; so it may be worth briefly summarising the position. The issue is that Sir Robert's organisation claims that its technological investigations into back projection, travelling matte, etc.—or, in his own words, "scientific plumbing of the industry"—can also be applied to the cinema as an art. SIGHT AND SOUND disputed this, on the grounds that art has no plumbing, and suggested that while it was logical and valuable to apply industrial research to industry, it was vainglorious to carry it into the realms of art. "It is a singularly abstract view of the facts of life", writes Sir Robert, "to suppose that the art of the artist, and the livelihood of the artist, can safely be kept apart". But can the cost of typesetting have anything to do with the aesthetic value of a novel? Sir Robert appears to

(continued on page 356)



"Chance of a Lifetime": the new management settles in



"Chance of a Lifetime": the workers take over ("with too little trouble"?)

FILM AND PUBLIC :

CHANCE OF A LIFETIME

Chance of a Lifetime, made independently by Bernard Miles, was an agreeable, enterprising and modest film about a factory taken over by the workers, and their eventual relieved acceptance of the boss's return. It became a controversial issue when the circuits rejected the picture for its lack of box-office qualities, and the Government for the first time used its powers to order a circuit release. Odeon cinemas showed the picture, and Mr. Rank has claimed that results supported earlier fears: the film was not a box-office success.

This Mass-Observation survey was undertaken at the time of the film's London release. It must be emphasised that the comments of 100 cinema-goers cannot in any way be said to reverse the general box-office verdict, since the sample is too small to have statistical value. The survey, however, is printed here for its intrinsic interest, as an example of audience reactions to a specific, out-of-the-rut film.

Mass-Observation interviewed one hundred people, half men, half women, patrons of four London cinemas. On so small a sample, Mass-Observation can in no way claim that public taste has been wrongly diagnosed*—the film was shown in warm weather, in late June, but even after this has been taken into account, box office receipts may still be down. But the public reaction does show a remarkable consensus of opinion: only one in ten disliked the film; one in two thought it *outstandingly* good; men and women thought equally well of it, and only one person, an old lady of seventy-five, suggested that "it could have done with a bit of romance". Such agreement, even among a small number, may reflect wider feeling, while the reasons given for liking, or disliking, the film may be useful to film makers generally.

Mass-Observation's interviewers asked whether the film had been liked; if so why, and if not why not. They asked those who had enjoyed the film if there was any aspect of it they disliked, and those who had not enjoyed it whether any aspect had pleased them. They asked all people interviewed why they had gone to the film; what they thought it was trying to say, and whether they considered it better, worse or much the same as "the films you usually see".

*It should be mentioned that the sample was an adult one, so that teenagers, who constitute a large part of the cinema audience, were not represented. When results were correlated by age, however, there was no indication of increasing approval with increasing age.

One person in twenty had mixed feelings about the film; one in ten disliked it, but nearly all the rest thought it well produced, well acted, and found the story convincing and unusual. Some comments were very enthusiastic:—

"A good, honest, practical, down to earth film". (Insurance superintendent, 34 years.)

"... a great picture. It showed real life as it is in the workshops and factories". (Engineering student, 22 years.)

"Oh, it was really marvellous! Marvellous! I enjoyed it very much". (Housewife, 60 years.)

People liked *Chance of a Lifetime* for its subject, its "ordinariness": its realism and its sincerity were mentioned by two in every five. Next came production, acting and (mentioned by three people in every twenty) the fact that it was a British film. Next again, mentioned by fewer than two in twenty, came approval of the moral of the film, and of the way it linked interestingly, usefully or (as with one or two ex-factory hands) nostalgically, with work. Six people in twenty liked particular incidents mentioning:—"The bit where they get themselves in a mess and had to get out of it—the speeches from the workers' point of view—the ending, the way the boss came back".

The remainder felt, in a general way, that they liked rather than disliked the film. Here are some comments:—

"I liked it because it seemed so much like a slice out of normal life, seeing workmen instead of glamour girls". (Single woman, 27 years.)

"I liked its lovely Britishness, the way he thinks and works, and the showing of the factory from the inside. Most of us have never seen its like before". (Working class woman, 60 years.)

"I found it so interesting and so unusual, because one gets so tired of seeing love affairs. This is so different". (Housewife, 50 years.)

"I liked best of all, the moral—that just because you do a job with your hands, it doesn't necessarily mean that you are competent to do the executive side of the same job". (Transport manager, 30 years.)

"It was so straightforward. If somebody was wrong they said so, and they didn't mince any words about it". (Working woman, 40 years.)

"An everyday story about everyday people". (Working class young woman.)

Much of the film's entertainment value seems to come from this feeling of "everydayness". There was only one suggestion that the workers were "types" rather than people, and hardly any criticism of the acting, even among those who disliked the picture. These found it less easy to criticise than to praise; even when specifically asked, three in five either found nothing to dislike, or were vague. One in five criticised incidents in the film, and the rest were mainly concerned with *lack* of realism, with the "slowness" of the picture or occasionally with technical flaws. One such "technical" complaint, from an office cleaner, was:—

"I don't think that the canteen would have been dirty in a factory. They generally have good canteens and clean".

A working man said: "... factories were old fashioned before the war, but when you see factories now you don't find things as old fashioned as that".

Dislike of particular incidents or characters was again often a personal identification:—

"I didn't like one or two of the ways of the men who were so cocksure that they could do things and then found they couldn't". (Widow, 55 years.)

"Where they shot the rabbits and sold them to the canteen assistant for eighteen bob, and the boss said he should give them the eighteen bob back. Now I know I'd have said 'You've got some sauce', or something like that". (Working class man, 30 years.)

Criticisms of slowness, inadequate acting, or direction, sounded less personal:—

"It lacked continuity—a bit jerky. It lacked the finish which a really well finished film has". (Middle class man, 60 years.)

"It was a little too idealistic in some parts, the ideas were good, but far fetched in the way they did them. The workers stepped in with too little trouble". (Working class man, 30 years.)

People's reasons for seeing the film are best expressed in tabular form.

Reasons	Percentage mentioning this reason		
	Men	Women	Total
Don't know, vague	4	2	3
Nothing to do; didn't choose film	30	28	29
Come regularly to this cinema ...	16	24	20
Wanted to see it (reason <i>not</i> given)	10	8	9
Recommended, read criticism, saw trailer	26	26	26
Because it was British	2	11	6
To see a particular star	8	2	5
Miscellaneous reasons	4	0	2

It is interesting to see that more than a quarter came because of a previous interest in the film from trailer, critic or personal recommendation, and also to find that many of the twenty-nine per cent. who came because they had nothing better to do thought the film a good one.

One person in ten liked *Chance of a Lifetime* for its moral, and none disliked it for this reason: but how far was there real awareness of the film's purpose? Just over one in three of these cinema-goers, men and women, hit the nail fairly on the head. The film, as they saw it, was a plea for better understanding and co-operation between employees and employer. (The term "joint consultation" was used only once):—

"The whole idea behind it is to get workers and management together, everyone working together for the benefit of the whole". (Working man, 50 years.)

For three people in twenty the film was an argument for experienced bosses—though another three in twenty found it difficult to explain what it was about at all. Twelve per cent. of men, and no women, believed that the film proved that workers could run a factory if they had the chance; twenty-two per cent. of women, as against eight per cent. of men, said that it proved the workers could *not* run it, and should therefore learn their place. Women film-goers are, it seems, especially critical of people who "think they know more than they do".

A few people produced other explanations: it was a political film, propaganda for Socialism or for the unions; a plea for nationalisation versus private enterprise; it showed that we must work more and grumble less; it was about democracy; it was about agitators.

"It showed that it is better to let everybody have their say before decisions are made. In a way it was rather like political propaganda. But I didn't really mind that. It makes you think, though". (Middle class woman, 38 years.)

"It needs the workers to get everything started, and only after they have fought for it will the employers give them what they want". (Working man, 60 years.)

"It is to recognize their bosses kind of thing. Of course, it needs some understanding, sort of thing". (Working class girl, 20 years.)

Not only did many people enjoy the film, but half of those interviewed thought it a better film than they usually saw (women being here in a slightly higher proportion than men), and fewer than one in ten thought it worse. Reasons for this were again mainly the film's realistic and life-like qualities, and so on. The few critics were concerned with "a feeble ending", a "slowing moving story", and "highbrowism" at the expense of entertainment.

It seems clear that *Chance of a Lifetime* made a strong impression on most of those people who by chance, design, or habit, had seen it. Whether films of this character would have a continued appeal is more difficult to say. Perhaps they might. But on a small sample such as this it is difficult to draw any important conclusions, beyond the fact that in London at any rate the film was very popular among those who went to see it. The consistent emphasis, in this and other cinema-going polls on the popularity of "real-life" stories and of British films would tend to confirm that there is a consistent audience for pictures of this type.

Without comparative results from similar questionnaires on other films, it is also impossible to assess the significance of the fact that so few people were disappointed with the film. Information from other Mass-Observation surveys, however, appears to indicate that the picture caused less dissatisfaction in the audience than many others.

INDEPENDENCE

Complete independence is a condition rarely achieved in the cinema; most film makers to-day have to be satisfied with a relative freedom. Costs go up, commercial considerations gain in importance, the desire to experiment meets with caution and reserve. In the 30's, Vigo managed to keep his freedom (though the distributors mauled *L'Atalante* afterwards): special circumstances have allowed Welles with *Citizen Kane*, Olivier with *Henry V*, Flaherty with *Louisiana Story*, de Sica with *Bicycle Thieves*, to do as they liked, and have restrained a great many others from doing what they liked, in the last few years.

It is a pleasure to salute, then, three films recently completed under conditions of rare independence. They are Gian-Carlo Menotti's *The Medium*, made in Rome, Paul Rotha's *No Resting Place*, made in Ireland, and de Sica's *Miracolo a Milano*, most of which was shot on location in Northern Italy.



The Medium

Photographs by John Deakin

Gian-Carlo Menotti's musical drama, *The Medium*, had considerable success in New York but was unjustly neglected in Paris and London. A macabre and original fantasy, it proclaimed a new and strikingly versatile talent. Its writer and composer has now ventured into film direction, and added new characters, scenes and music for the screen version, made on a small budget in Rome. Marie Powers, as the alarmingly fake medium, and Leo Coleman, as the negro boy, repeat their original characterisations, joined by Anna Maria Alberghetti, a 14-year-old Italian girl who last year made her début in Carnegie Hall.





No Resting Place

Ian Niall's novel *No Resting Place*, adapted by Paul Rotha, Michael Orrom and Colin Lesslie (the producer of the film), with its setting transferred from Cumberland to Ireland, was shot entirely in Ireland with no studio work at all. The leading players are Michael Gough, well known on the London stage, and Eithne Dunne, of the Abbey Theatre. For the important part of this couple's young son, a newspaper boy was found in Dublin. *No Resting Place* was produced on a budget which, if it were tripled, would still be considered modest for a feature film of quality to-day. It represents a total breakaway from custom—in its absence of stars, of studio work, its use of non-professional players chosen on the spot—of the kind that is particularly welcome and valuable in British films to-day.





In production for nearly a year, Vittorio de Sica's long-awaited film is finally nearing completion, and will probably be shown by the end of January. De Sica has admitted that the large amount of trick photography needed for the film (for which an expert, Ned Mann, was called in from Hollywood) has been the principal delaying factor, and that related problems have necessitated the re-shooting of several scenes. Francesco Golisano, the ex-postman discovered by Renato Castellani for *Sotto il Sole di Roma*, plays Toto, the youth in Cesare Zavattini's story whose good deeds are rewarded by an angel who gives him the power to work miracles. The action takes place in a beggar village on the outskirts of Milan. As soon as *Miracolo a Milano* is finished, de Sica hopes to start work on *Umberto D.*, another screenplay supplied by the prolific Zavattini. It tells the story of a man who is kept from going through with plans for suicide by the thought of leaving behind his faithful dog.

Robert Hawkins

Miracolo a Milano



INTERVIEW WITH EMMER

Francis Kóval

LUCIANO EMMER IS NOT A NAME that has been seen in lights or even in very large print anywhere. But to the vanguard of film enthusiasts it means a good deal. Those who have seen his art films, such as *Il Paradiso Perduto* (from the paintings by Bosch) or *Dramma di Cristo* (from Giotto's frescoes) are impressed by the vivid expressiveness of the paintings as seen by the apparently ubiquitous eye of the camera. Elaborate camera movement and dramatic editing make the figures seem almost three-dimensional, and despite the black-and-white photography the human eye and its guiding mind enjoy the illusion of colour and movement. In his documentaries on Venice, *Isole Nella Laguna* and *Romantici a Venezia*, Emmer reveals a visual imagination and a striking talent for composition in his own right.

When Luciano Emmer appeared in front of the screen at the Locarno Film Festival to introduce his first feature film *Domenica d'Agosto*, he cast a forlorn look at the dark mountains surrounding the open-air cinema and said: "It is very strange to remember that a few years ago I was hiding from the Germans among those very mountains. I feel as apprehensive to-night as I did then, although for different reasons. I have achieved one of my ambitions by finally making a feature film, but it is up to the public to judge whether I shouldn't have stuck to documentaries".

When he talked to me later that evening, he confessed that he was far from satisfied with his achievement. The chance of making *Domenica d'Agosto* came very suddenly: the film had to be made quickly and cheaply, with hardly any studio work. So he wrote the script together with Sergio Amidei, Cesare Zavattini and a few others in less than a fortnight.

"I did not want to have an 'omnibus film' composed of different episodes", he said, "nor a documentary on a summer Sunday in Rome, but the dramatic story of that particular day and of those people whose lives suddenly became entangled by fate or coincidence, whatever you like to call it. My greatest difficulty was to get rid of literary souvenirs, which threatened to frustrate all my efforts to be as sincere and unpretentious as possible. To accomplish this it was also essential to find the right types for my characters; and I am glad that in the end I arrived at a choice which includes only five actors, whilst all the others have the great advantage of being just themselves. I believe that in some cases I waded too deep into the stories, which should have been only just sketched in. . .".



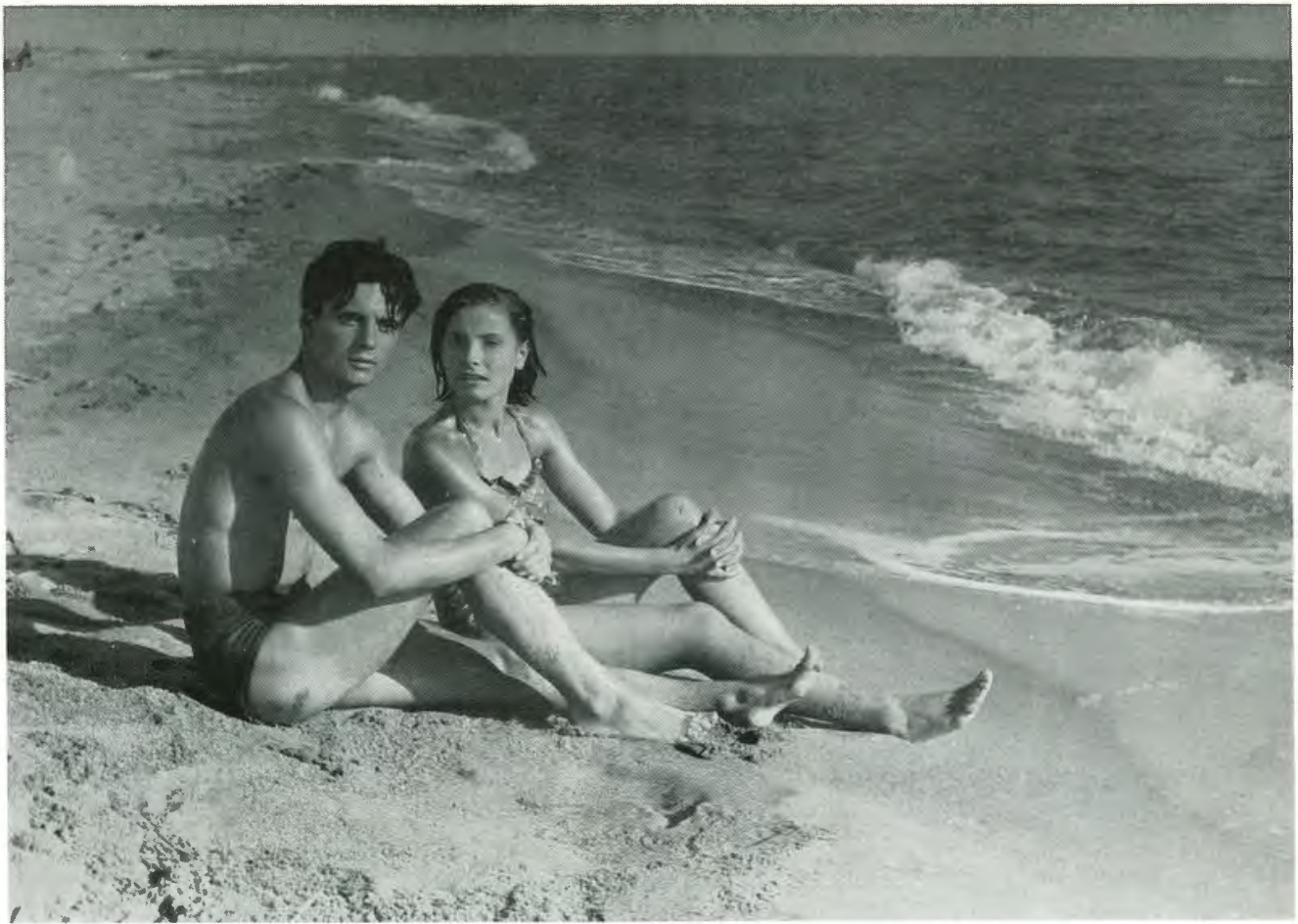
Photograph by Francis Koval

This last statement strikes me as rather surprising, because all the critics at Locarno seemed to agree that none of the stories was given sufficient emphasis to override the others and to capture the spectator's interest in the characters. I mentioned the early Fejos picture *Solitude* with which *Domenica d'Agosto* can fairly be compared in many respects, and Luciano Emmer agreed readily, and admitted that he might have been subconsciously influenced by that film, which he had seen and liked many years ago.

It is different, however, with his art documentaries. When at the age of twenty he first started to work on them, he had never seen a film of that kind. He has not, even now, seen Henri Storck's *Le Monde de Paul Delvaux*.

Luciano Emmer, quiet-spoken and reserved, is not at all the type of temperamental Italian as imagined by the English. There are, in fact, many people who do not realise the enormous difference that exists between the northern and the southern Italians. Now, Emmer was born in 1918 in Milan, whose population is supposed to be shrewd, hardworking, business-like. Up to the age of twelve he spent his school days in Venice.

"That is where my love for the Laguna and the sleepy waters of the canals comes from", he says. "In a certain way I re-discovered my childhood when I was making those two short films on Venice, and it made me extremely happy. I know that they are slightly romantic and decadent, but somehow I had to get these emotional elements out of my system. Now that I have left behind that phase of my development, the melancholy spirit will not hamper me any longer in my future work, which—I hope—will mostly be concentrated on feature films".



"Domenica d'Agosto". Franco Interlenghi, Anna Baldini

Of the beginnings of his film-work he talks with great sincerity and modesty. He first discovered his interest in the cinema when studying law at the Milan University. He joined the students' "Ciné-Club", was greatly impressed by a number of retrospective shows, and finally—spurred into action by Tatiana Granding (who later was to become his wife)—he started making shorts with a 16mm. camera. Then, a common interest brought him together with Enrico Gras, whose mind was set on making an animated cartoon in colour. This project had to be abandoned owing to lack of means, and in 1938 they began preparing their first film on Giotto's frescoes: *The Drama of Christ*.

"What Enrico really wanted", says Emmer, "was to detach the figures of the painting from their background and to make them move, so that the picture would come to life in a kind of animated cartoon. The only reason that we did not put this idea into practice was the smallness of our resources, which would never have covered such an expensive undertaking.

"Mind you, we treated the whole affair as an experiment. We had no ambition to make cultural documents or to spread art propaganda. We were just interested in the possibilities of the camera, and wanted with its help to translate the dramatic elements of an old and beautiful painting into the language of the cinema".

Emmer is not the man to give himself airs or to exaggerate the importance of his technique. On the contrary, he makes light of the difficulties encountered through lack of proper equipment:

"Really and truly not much technical skill is needed to make that kind of film. Only a little experience with lighting is

necessary to bring out the desired effects. To achieve the smooth, gliding movement of the camera we hit on a quite simple idea. We mounted our camera on an old lathe which for our purpose proved as efficient as any modern camera crane.

"I particularly enjoyed filming *The Legend of St. Orsola* in the Venice Academy, although it was very hard work: during the day we were gliding in gondolas and shooting our *Isole Nella Laguna*, and only in the evenings—when the Academy was closed to the public—were we allowed to rig up our arc-lights in front of the Carpaccio pictures".

All these documentaries, incidentally, did not at the time arouse any interest in Italy. The director of the French "Cinémathèque", Henri Langlois, was the first to "discover" Emmer and to arrange private viewings of his shorts in Paris and in London. Only enquiries from these capitals drew, in due course, Rome's attention to the young film-maker's developing talent.

A profile of Luciano Emmer would not be complete without mention of his beautiful and moving film on war cemeteries, *Bianchi Pascoli*. But the documentary period seems to be for him a thing of the past. His latest film, now nearing completion, again concerns the lives of common people. He speaks about it with genuine enthusiasm:

"It is a simple, human story set against the background of an international football match. Thousands of Italian sports fans take advantage of the cheap trips to Paris organized for this occasion and face any hardship to 'support' their team. Each of those youths has, of course, a highly romantic conception of Paris as a place of extravagant elegance and



Bosch and Botticelli. Emmer's "Paradiso Perduto" and "Allegoria di Primavera"

fabulous amusements. Their contact with their French opposite numbers and the real Paris forms the main subject of the picture, which will probably be called *Paris Est Toujours Paris*. Again I shall use as few actors as possible and rely on local talent, wherever I find it!"

If Luciano Emmer succeeds in giving to this undoubtedly

attractive subject the documentary depth of his Venice films, the invigorating freshness of *Domenica d'Agosto* and, in addition, some directorial polish acquired by experience, his name may shine at this year's Edinburgh Festival in even brighter letters than in 1950.



The Seventh Art



Every time I make a picture, the critics' estimate of the public drops another ten per cent. (Cecil B. de Mille, quoted in *Picturegoer*.)



Intruder in the Dust—Made in Oxford, Mississippi, this picture was designed to improve race relations. Our white patrons enjoyed it very much, but I don't think the coloured people understood it enough to enjoy it. Not a single one came to see it the second night. I don't know what happened, but one explained, "We wants to be left alone. We like Westerns". (Cinema manager quoted on "What the Picture did for Me"—*Motion Picture Herald*.)



I saw *The Jolson Story* 21 times, and although I saw its sequel *Jolson Sings Again* only ten times I made two trips to Brighton especially for this purpose. (Letter in *Evening News*.)

Because his mother would not give him money to attend a cinema show, 17-year-old Sohrab Rustom Shariff committed suicide on Saturday the 2nd September. (*Filmindia*.)



With almost Russian élan he composed the fleeting cavalcade of men grasping rifles, horses' hooves in the dust, and the rousing strains of *La Cucuracha* into a symphony of rebellion, without forgetting its causes—Mexico's unbearable economic conditions. (Egon Larsen in *Spotlight on Films*.)



The special agent's job is continually being glorified in the interests of anti-Soviet propaganda. . . . (*Daily Worker* review of *The Clouded Yellow*.)

(THE FRONT PAGE, continued from page 348.)

think so. It is possible to relate the factors, he considers, "by an objective study of the cost—in the widest sense—of achieving an aesthetically satisfactory result, and of striking a balance between the emotional, educational and aesthetic value of the picture and the cost of the technological skills and ingenuities which we lavish on it".

Respectfully, one has to call this mere verbiage. What is "the cost—in the widest sense—of achieving an aesthetically

satisfactory result" in the cases, say, of *Bicycle Thieves* and of *The Grapes of Wrath*? Is one to believe that any "objective study" is capable of "striking a balance between the emotional, educational and aesthetic value" (Sir Robert does not disclose on what grounds he judges these) and the material cost of these two films, one of which was several times more expensive than the other? Our original editorial pleaded for concrete terms of reference: the plea continues.

Is Lana Jealous of Liz Taylor? See Page 38

Motion Picture

THE FAN MAGAZINES bear much the same relation to the motion picture industry as dope sheets to the race track. Both are appendages of a greater attraction, the difference being that movie magazines dwell on cinema players, and dope sheets feature horses.

Quite apart from their remarkably low calibre editorial content, compared to which the confession books are almost classical, motion picture magazines are unique in the publishing business. They are devoted exclusively to personalities and production affairs of the film industry, yet are in no sense house organs. Nor are they trade papers like "Variety" or "The Hollywood Reporter", which are read assiduously by all literate members of the motion picture colony. The fan magazines are published by non-movie people for other non-movie people. The Big Six are properties of general publishers independent of financial control by the studios.

The phenomenal thing—and the superlative must be used with caution in writing about motion picture subjects—is the disdainful attitude which film producers and their employees display toward fan magazines, and the broad censorship which they exercise over them.

There is a temptation to simplify the relationship between the fan papers and studios by describing the former as parasites, but the delineation is not as apt as it might seem. It is true that these magazines and their writers exist primarily on handouts from studio publicity departments. In return, however, they provide the studios with an outlet for publicity of a uniformly favourable character, something which they cannot command from any other medium of public information.

Fan magazine circulation is well over five million. Audit Bureau Circulation figures on the six largest break down as follows:

Modern Screen (Dell) ...	1,168,445
Photoplay (Macfadden) ...	1,211,644
Screenland/Silver Screen (Hunter)	924,430 (combined)
Motion Picture (Fawcett) ...	795,173
Movieland (Hillman) ...	290,221

Allowing three readers per copy—a conservative allowance, considering that these publications are popular in beauty parlours, barber shops and dentists' waiting rooms—the fan magazines have a following of about 15,000,000, or a fifth of the estimated average weekly movie attendance. From the standpoint of studio publicity, none of this circulation is wasted, for obviously nobody but a movie fan reads a film magazine.

Bearing these facts in mind, it would seem that the studios should cater to the film magazines, rather than otherwise, since their struggle to plant copy in the newspapers and other organs of the general press is unremitting and often unfruitful, whereas fan magazines are indiscriminately receptive to studio releases.

On my desk, for instance, are two Warner Brothers' press handouts labelled "exclusive in your city for immediate release": no metropolitan paper in Los Angeles used either even as a filler. One, entitled "Fateful Tresses", is a 300-word effusion on the effects of hair shading on the careers of various film actresses. The other, called "Osculation Elevated", purports to explain the "fine but very important difference



Glenn Ford



Alan Ladd



Peter Lawford

**The Real Lowdown
ON THEIR LIVES
AND LOVES ★ ★**

(Movie Glamor Guys)



Wanda Hendrix
and Audie Murphy
now face the
desperate question:
Must conflicts between
them tear their
bright dreams apart?

BY CYNTHIA MILLER

This torn picture of Audie and Wanda symbolizes their current unhappiness.

(Modern Screen)

QUESTIONNAIRE

Which stories did you enjoy the most in our December issue? WRITE THE NUMBERS 1, 2 and 3 AT THE RIGHT of your 1st, 2nd and 3rd choices.

So Proudly She Hails (Gregory Peck)
Rage In Heaven (Wanda Hendrix-Audie Murphy)
Trouble Ahead For Mitchum?
Stars on a Spree (Bergman, Fontaine, Cotten) by Hedda Hopper.
Two Loves Have We (Roy Rogers-Dale Evans)
I Live on the Rim of Heaven (Jeanne Crain)
This Love of Ours (Dana Andrews)
I Won't Go Steady (Janet Leigh)
My Sneak Party (Diana Lynn, John Lund, Marie Wilson)
Gary Cooper's Mountain Hideaway.
Annie, Get Your Guy (Ann Sheridan)
He's Not My Baby Anymore (Farley Granger)
She Wants To Do Homework (Jane Powell)
My Plans for Gable.
Too Young to Die (Frank Sinatra-Bing Crosby-Bob Hope)
Hey, Look! We're Dancin'! (Alan Ladd, Mona Freeman)
My Prayer Was Answered (Doris Day)
Picture of the Month (Battleground)
Louella Parsons' Good News

(Modern Screen)

EXCLUSIVE: the TRUTH about the VAN JOHNSON MARRIAGE! by May Mann

(Motion Picture)

May's diary is sprinkled with names that make news—romantic news. . . .

New Man of Swoon!

Soon you'll be swooning for MGM's Peter Shaw. He's Joan Crawford's favourite date, which is understandable, for he's quite the best-looking boy Hollywood's seen in many a moon. Before Joan, he occasionally dated Lana Turner.

Peter's British, tall, and handsome. A former RAF flyer, he came to Hollywood last summer. We met at Adrienne Helis' Sunday tennis matches. Adrienne introduced him to Louis B. Mayer, who signed him for stardom. Peter can dance, as we can personally testify every time we think of Genie Clair Smith's Hawaiian party at the Beverley Tropics. Hawaiian music, a full moon, a star-studded sky, and dancing with Peter Shaw! ! ! (Screen Stars)

between screen kisses delivered to a wife with whom he is falling out of love and to the lady who is taking the wife's place in his heart"—a plot development in a Warner picture.

Publicity departments of all studios turn out tripe such as this in a daily stream, but surprisingly little of it finds its way into newspaper print. In the film magazines, however, it can be found, often intact, in the gossip columns and production notes. This being the case, one would expect the studios to reciprocate with friendly, if not positively enthusiastic, cooperation: the situation is in fact otherwise.

Charles Samuels, correspondent for "Motion Picture" and other Fawcett publications, protests this paradox in a plaintive piece, "Should have Stayed in Brooklyn" (Hollywood Reporter, September 23, 1946). "In all the years I've been writing about Hollywood people, I don't think I ever wrote more than three slams", he says. "Despite all this, just the other day a publicity man tried to get me to change my copy. He'd asked me, as a courtesy, to send him a couple of pages I was writing about the lot's pet starlet for my Stars of Tomorrow series. All I'd written that could be construed as detrimental was that the girl was uncommunicative and difficult to interview. The other stuff I wrote about her read like excerpts from a love letter. Nevertheless, the press agent called up the next day and said he was unhappy about the 'uncommunicative' paragraph and asked me to change it".

Samuels refused, being, as he admits, in a more independent position than most writers, since his stay in the movie capital is a brief, annual event. As he says, "Now and for years past every accredited fan magazine writer who works the year round in Hollywood has to submit a carbon copy of every story he gets out of a studio".

Samuels' remedy for studio censorship is to "stop printing mush. Refuse to let studios censor stories. Let them bar writers from their lots. I can write—as anyone with sound newspaper experience can—interesting stuff about any Hollywood personality without approaching him or setting foot in his studio".

In prescribing this formula, however, Mr. Samuels is reckoning without his readers; "mush" is the stock-in-trade of fan magazines, which are slanted for that fifth of the movie audience to whom pictures are a narcotic, rather than casual entertainment. These readers are emotionally adolescent, and their interest in actors and actresses has nothing to do with artistry. They are but slightly concerned with the professional attainments of their idols; they want to share the personal lives of their favourite screen figures, which of course they can do only vicariously. It is through fan magazines that they enter into what they believe is that charmed world of naughty-but-nice Hollywood: it is doubtful whether they would appreciate or even read a well-edited, factual magazine dealing with the picture industry.

The studios know this. They also know that it is the readers of fan magazines who raise an actor from the ranks of average to the pinnacle of box-office "take", since their abnormal enthusiasm blinds whatever critical faculties they might otherwise possess. If they are mad about Robert Trueheart or Terry Strongarms they will rush to see his every film not once but several times.

Physical attraction, particularly that elusive quality known as sex appeal, is what distinguishes a great box office attraction from an ordinary feature player. The studios exploit this condition, instead of trying to combat it, which is why actors are stereotyped; there is the Clark Gable (rough) type, the Charles Boyer (sophisticated) type; the George Raft (sinister Latin), the Van Johnson (clean American) and so on. Among

feminine players are the sweet type, siren type, clever type, etc.

When, through trial and error, a studio finds that one of its players appeals in a certain physical category, the publicity machine sets to work to sell the public on that star's type as thoroughly as it is sold on Listerine's ability to combat halitosis. The value of the fan magazine in this respect has already been mentioned; but the zealous interest of its readers in the affairs of Hollywood personalities makes it that much more dangerous potentially. Just one article, for instance, hinting that America's boy friend is a congenital sissy would be sufficient to reduce his box office value. So the studios take no chances: they check every line written for publication by correspondents of the fan books.

Their censorship is enforced by control of source material. Mr. Samuels is right when he says that it is possible to write entertainingly about a Hollywood personality without setting foot in a studio. It is also possible to do it once or twice without interviewing the subject. But to turn out continuously the intimate, first-person stories about screen illuminaries, which fan magazine customers seem to demand, would be impossible without access to the studios or stars themselves.

The film plants have a fairly tight system of control, except over the hit-and-run correspondent. To gain admission to a studio, a writer must be accredited by the Motion Picture Association of America, formerly the Hays office; all major producers belong, and the opposition of any one member is sufficient to cause the M.P.A. to refuse or revoke a correspondent's card.

If this were the extent of studio control over the press, the correspondent could still have recourse to the "unauthorized" interview off the lot. Foreseeing this, the producers have plugged the leak. Along with the morality clauses are paragraphs in the contracts of all actors, directors, writers and executives, forbidding them to grant any interviews which have not been cleared by their studios: these provisions are enforced more literally than the morals commitments. Rarely, if ever, does any film star answer questions or give statements to the press except in the presence of a studio "publicist" who guides the interview.

From this it can be seen that, convenient as the fan magazines are to the studios as a publicity release, the studios are essential to the existence of the magazines. The circus can exist without the barker, but the barker cannot dispense with the circus.

The film industry is sometimes criticized because, in an era of nuclear fission, bacteriological warfare, a world-wide struggle between capitalism and various forms of collectivism, strikes, universal military training, widespread moral degeneration, and other vital social issues, it concerns itself almost exclusively with the superficial aspects of society. But the film magazines do not even offer their readers a true picture of superficial Hollywood; they cannot manage to get straight even the trivia which constitute their entire editorial content.

Irving Hoffman, in a back number of the "Hollywood Reporter", took them apart and exposed their sloppy journalism. The following is typical:—"we find Jack Holland querying Olivia de Havilland in a piece titled *Olivia Catches Up*—"Will you be married by the time the story hits the stands"? Olivia

"Every Girl Needs Love" Jeanne Crain Confesses (Motion Picture)

Ida Lupino and Howard Duff are a long way from shopping for "His" and "Her" towel sets, but they've got Hollywood goggle-eyed over their romance. Howard and Ida did their sparking right under the noses of all the movietown Sam Spades for months before anybody caught on. And Ida wasn't acting on impulse, either, when she scooted over to Hawaii to watch the sunsets with Howard. Here's a tip on the big thing in their woo-fest: They laugh like crazy on their dates. (Motion Picture)

SHIRLEY TEMPLE'S SHATTERED LOVE

WE WERE VERY FORTUNATE in being allowed to publish in last month's issue, under the title "Baby Talk", a personal letter Linda Christian Power had written to her close friend, Maya Van Horn. It told of the hopes and plans she and Tyrone had for their coming baby. Then, too late to make any changes, we heard the tragic news that Linda had lost her unborn child. The story will never be more heartbreakingly told than in the telegram Tyrone sent Maya from Paris. It read: LINDA IN AMERICAN HOSPITAL STOP DOING WELL STOP BUT ONLY TWO OF US NOW. (Modern Screen)

As ex-pug in Killers pic., Burt Lancaster's brawn plus ability made him filmdom's "new actor most in demand", won approval of dignified Nylonsoxers who named him "Sheer Delight of The Year". (Movie Stars Parade)



Thrill of thrills . . . Night of nights . . . This pretty blonde teenster almost swooned when Richard Ney clasped her thusly in signing the desired autograph.

The men in Ann Sheridan's life come and go. Does she realise that laughs aren't enough to make a romance last, that in order to hold a guy you have to work at it?

(*"Modern Screen"*)

opined: 'I doubt very much if I will be married in the near future. . . . In fact, I am not considering the move at present'. Unfortunately, the magazine presenting *Olivia Catches Up* never caught up with Miss de Havilland, who shortly thereafter married Marcus Goodrich".

The naivety of fan magazine readers is incredible, as is their patience, for not only do competing magazines contradict one another's "facts", but it is no novelty for two authors in the same number to furnish inconsistent data on the same topic.

The formula for motion picture interview articles is simple: a "come-on" title promising the most intimate, sensational revelation, a series of fake questions and answers which demonstrate how human and wholesome the star remains despite the corrupting influences of fame and fortune, three or four plugs for recent and current productions, and a God-bless-you-dear-reader conclusion.

Seldom in the most banal house organ can one find so much advertising in the editorial columns as in movie magazines. An issue of "Motion Picture", for example, runs a story by James Poole called *The Rooney Reconversion*. It tells how Actor Rooney's war experiences (charitably unitemized)

converted him from a madcap, pleasure-loving cynic into a home-loving faithful husband and father, with a new appreciation for democracy and Americanism. (Shortly after publication, Rooney's wife divorced him.) In the course of the reconversion, Mr. Poole managed to insert mentions of the *Andy Hardy* series which Rooney had finished, and of *Ah Wilderness*, which he was scheduled to do. Mention of a star's most recent, current and probable future productions in a fan magazine interview piece is *de rigueur*, no matter how foreign to the context.

The literary level of fan magazines is indicated in the following excerpts from a recent issue of "Photoplay", probably the best of them. "The King Takes a Lady, by Ruth Waterbury. . . . And if you want the whole truth about it, the most wonderful part of life, concerning Clark Gable and the former Sylvia Hawkes, former Lady Ashley, former Mrs. Douglas Fairbanks Sr., former Lady Stanley of Alderley, is that these two enchanting human beings got together. Because they are, honestly and truly, completely right for one another".

And, concerning Miss Ava Gardner (one of the former Mrs. Rooneys) "Today the frightened, lonely little girl Ava used to be is no more. Today Ava is suddenly a woman, mature and more beautiful than ever. And she is radiantly happy". Well!

Whoever heard of a barker criticizing the show he touts? Neither do the fan magazines. The department "Picture Parade" in a back issue of "Motion Picture" reviewed 45 films. The rating key consists of these symbols: 4 stars, excellent; 3 stars, good; 2 stars, fair (apparently "Motion Picture" has no rating for poor) and even the fair rating was used sparingly. In this issue, only one of the 45 pictures reviewed was so stigmatized; others equally poor were given 2½ stars.

The question arises whether there are sufficient readers to support a journal devoted to sane and truthful chronicling of Hollywood's doings. Most of the fifteen million fan readers are of the type who would read "True Romances", except that these books require a trifle more imagination; the fan magazines provide them with living subjects to which to attach their yearnings for romance and glamour. The truth about Hollywood is often boring, occasionally obscene, seldom glamorous. It is conclusive that no market exists among the present fan magazine public for such prosaic truths; whether another segment of the movie public would be interested in a serious film publication is speculative.

It has been shown that the motion picture industry makes use of fan magazines. The fan magazines must have the motion picture industry. Apparently fifteen million Americans require both.

Thinking Out Loud: *I'm sorry I lost my temper at Betty Hutton at a party. But I boiled when I read that Betty said the press was responsible for the temporary break-up of her marriage to Ted Briskin. So I gave her a piece of my mind. Betty broke into tears and a rousing time was had by all. Later, she told me she never said anything so wrong, so we made up over the telephone the next morning.*

I'm not sure I like the new raspberry color so many of our blonde belles are wearing. Supposed to be quite new and chic. I saw Lana Turner in a raspberry-red satin dress with lipstick the exact shade of her gown—all very startling, but I can think of more becoming colors for Lana. (Louella Parsons in Modern Screen)

Family Guy VAN JOHNSON

<i>Van Loves . . .</i>	<i>Van Hates . . .</i>
<i>To hold hands in the movies . . .</i>	<i>Rising early . . .</i>
<i>His wife Evie . . .</i>	<i>Answering letters and</i>
<i>To play the violin . . .</i>	<i>telephone calls . . .</i>
<i>All the fuss the ladies make over</i>	<i>His stubborn streak . . .</i>
<i>him . . .</i>	<i>Hollywood phonies . . .</i>
<i>Singing in the shower . . .</i>	<i>Lack of courtesy in</i>
<i>Lana Turner's sex appeal . . .</i>	<i>others . . .</i>
<i>To fix things around the</i>	<i>Racial intolerance . . .</i>
<i>house . . .</i>	<i>The fact that he's a</i>
<i>Making funny faces at people</i>	<i>worry bird . . .</i>
<i>he likes . . .</i>	<i>Too much makeup on</i>
	<i>women . . .</i>

(Movie Glamor Guys)

If you're a Gable fan, and gosh who isn't, here's the inside track on how to win your man. The screen's perennial king doesn't like gals who play hard to get.

It's fine to be ladylike and not run after men, but when he calls a gal for a date, she has to snap at the offer or else she's out of luck. Dating Clark is grand fun, for he's romantic, he's attentive and he's flirtatious. Oh, how he'd flirt with you all evening, calling you "honey", and how the other girls would swoon. Movie Glamor Guys)

Big, Brawny and Oh Bedelia!

(Movie Story)



Here he is, girls—Cute Kid Curtis. He's a New Yorker, 25 years old on June 3, 6 feet, blue eyes and black hair

THE MAYOR OF CASTERBRIDGE



The Pump, centre of Casterbridge life

Some notes by Thorold Dickinson

FOREWORD

During 1949 the Associated British Picture Corporation commissioned Wolfgang Wilhelm and Thorold Dickinson to prepare a screenplay based on Thomas Hardy's novel *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. When a budget was worked out for the production, it was found that the cost of the film as written would be too great to be recovered from the British market. It was agreed that so English a subject was unsuitable for the kind of Anglo-American co-production which depends on American stars and points of view for its commercial exploitation in the U.S.A. It is therefore doubtful whether a film on this scale can be made in present Economic conditions.

The following notes contain an excerpt from the screenplay, and are illustrated with designs evolved by John Howell, working side by side with the writers. Excerpts and designs are published by courtesy of the Associated British Picture Corporation.

I

The four principal characters in the novel are described by Thomas Hardy in the following terms.

MICHAEL HENCHARD. About forty years of age (after the prologue); mayor and principal corn merchant of the town. Of heavy frame, large features and commanding voice, his general build rather coarse than compact. Rich complexion, verging on swarthinness, a flashing black eye, dark bushy eyebrows and hair. His laugh not encouraging to strangers.

Its producer's personal goodness, if he had any, would be of a very fitful cast—an occasional, almost oppressive generosity, rather than a mild and constant kindness. A vehement, gloomy being who has quitted the ways of vulgar men, without light to guide him on a better way.

DONALD FARFRAE (who becomes Henchard's manager and later mayor). A young Scotsman of remarkably pleasant aspect, ruddy and of a fair countenance, bright-eyed and slight in build. Fresh and slenderly handsome. Earnest, diligent and capable of strong emotion. Bright of intellect, full of Northern energy. His character the reverse of Henchard's.

LUCETTA TEMPLEMAN (Henchard's mistress and later Farfrae's wife). A young lady of good family, attractive, with large lustrous eyes, well bred and well educated. The orphan daughter of some harum-scarum military officer who had got into difficulties and had his pay sequestrated. Lonely and terribly careless of appearances when she was younger. Later her heart longed for some ark into which it could fly and rest.

ELIZABETH-JANE (Henchard's step-daughter and at first presumed daughter); 18 years old. Earnest and sober of mien. Her face though somewhat wan and incomplete possessed the raw materials of beauty in a promising degree. There was an under-handsomeness in it struggling to reveal itself through the provisional curves of immaturity, and the casual disfigurements that resulted from the straitened circumstances

of her life. Her young mind was struggling for enlargement. The desire—noble and repressed—of Elizabeth-Jane's heart was indeed to see, to hear and to understand. How could she become a woman of wider knowledge, higher repute—better, as she termed it—this was her constant enquiry of her mother.

II

The Mayor of Casterbridge is the story of a Dorset community, based on Dorchester in the 1840's. Hardy shuffled Dorchester around for the convenience of his novel just about as much as we shuffled the novel around for the convenience of the screenplay. For the sake of geographical unity we have centred the action of our community around the Dorchester town pump, with St. Peter's Church and the original Corn Exchange to the north on the north side of the east-west cross roads. South Street comes up past the Pump to the cross roads as it does to-day and disappears through a covered way under the Corn Exchange as it did until the old Exchange was demolished during the 1870's. This charming and graceful old building contained the corn market, the municipal offices and the magistrates' court, and so, side by side, with St. Peter's church, stand the civic and religious centres of the community.

The social centre, the King's Arms Hotel, where the mayor's banquet takes place, we have shifted to the west side of South Street alongside the Pump, and almost on the spot where the Antelope Hotel stands to-day. Around the Pump the chorus of yokels of Casterbridge sits and gossips and provokes the climax of the drama. The Town Bank is on the corner where a bank stands to-day. We have given the Casterbridge Chronicle an office round the corner in East Street opposite the magistrates' court, and next door is the chandler's shop of Mr. Bulge, who also sells music: he is conductor of the Town Band and of the church choir and orchestra. Mr. Bulge is one of two characters whom we have introduced for dramatic unity. As soon as we began to visualise the story, the two conductors kept on cropping up. So we merged them and made a comedy character out of the union.

The other character of our invention is Mrs. Trimlett, the mayor's housekeeper. One of the interesting differences between novels and plays on the one hand and films on the other is the amount of filling in of the picture that has to be done in adaptation to the screen. Think of the number of plays in which a mansion appears to be entirely staffed by a butler and a parlour maid, who are really only there to introduce the audience to the principal characters and these characters to each other.

Hardy leaves the domestic household of Michael Henchard, mayor and grain merchant, quite vague. We gave him a housekeeper, Mrs. Trimlett, who came more and more into the foreground as our work progressed. As we eliminated less important incidents, we took a firm hand with Susan, the wife whom Henchard sells in his youth and honourably remarries in his forties. Susan, a pale, pathetic, dull figure, lingers far too long in the novel and is reduced to a token in the screen play. But she has essential business in the plot. So too has Newson, the sailor who buys Susan and her baby daughter, Elizabeth-Jane, in the prologue. Newson's return as the end of the novel is the final blow of Nemesis which completes Henchard's downfall.

This reappearance of Newson is terms of screen drama would come as a belated straw—the last straw has already broken the camel's back. We therefore eliminated the return, and transferred the essential later duties of Susan and Newson to the charge of Mrs. Trimlett, to whom Susan on her death-

bed confides the protection of Elizabeth-Jane.

I have referred to two considerable eliminations from the novel, the life of Susan after her second marriage to Henchard, and the return of Newson and the marriage of Elizabeth-Jane which comprise the final chapters of the novel. The third main elimination from the story is the account of Henchard's bankruptcy, and the events which immediately follow it.

I am no advocate of screen adaptations for adaptation's sake, and I have considerable sympathy with any Hardy enthusiast who may fling aside these notes in anger at our desecration of a classic. But in this case I am convinced that we have less to be ashamed of than usual, that our script is a screenplay in its own right and, if it is ever produced, it may send some of its audience to examine the works of Hardy, and thus fulfil a double purpose.

We have introduced one technical device to tighten the tempo of our film. The subject falls naturally into twelve sequences or chapters, each of which begins and ends with the scene fading in and fading out. But within each sequence there are no optical effects to show the lapse of time or the shifting of scene from place to place. At one point even twenty years pass in the cutting from one shot to the next. In every case we have used these direct cuts to heighten the drama and quicken the dramatic effect.

One other point demands attention. While it is untrue to say that Hardy lacked a sense of humour, it is a fact that the novel rarely relents from grimness, and the humour where it is present is ironic more often than gay. In two hours of screen time such grimness tends to pall, and we have therefore in the first half of the story sought to inject comedy wherever Hardy allows an opportunity to do so, and occasionally we have transferred an incident from pathetic to comic circumstances.

III

The film opens with the sale of cakes, each decorated in sugar with the words WEYDON FAIR 1820. Beyond the cake stall in the light of flares the fair is dying down for the night. A sailor (Newson) buys a cake, buys from a gipsy a gaily patterned shawl, watches the sale by auction of a bony heifer and calf for five pounds ten shillings (three months wages to a farm hand) and is puzzled to hear the voice of a second auctioneer calling, "Who'll make an offer for this lady?"

In a tent where furmity broth is for sale, the seaman comes on a curious sight: a lean young haytrusser, Michael Henchard, growing drunk on rum bought with the last of his savings, is watching a farmhand offer his wife, Susan, and child, Elizabeth-Jane, for sale by auction. The rough onlookers are enjoying the scandal. The wife takes it with dignity, unbelieving until Henchard's indifference goads her to acceptance. When the price reaches five guineas, the sailor makes a bid and buys both wife and child, throwing five pound notes and five single shillings on the table, and walking off with his purchases. The onlookers, now silenced with disgust, leave the tent and Henchard falls into a drunken sleep. Dawn breaks, and he wakes, finds the money and the wedding ring which Susan has flung at him and makes for the nearest church where, on All Saints' Day, 1820, he swears on the Bible, before the altar, to avoid all strong liquors for the space of twenty-one years, being a year for every one that he has lived.

As Henchard rises from his knees, a brewer stands up into the scene, raises a flagon, and proposes the health of the new mayor of Casterbridge, who in twenty years has worked his way up from haytrusser to corn-factor and chief citizen.

Henchard, now a heavily built, swarthy man of forty, rises to reply as the town band by the pump in the street below plays "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow" by the light of torches.

But among the onlookers in the street a disturbance begins. The mayor has been selling grown wheat to the bakers and the bread has begun "to make the poor folks' insides plim like blowed bladders". As Henchard argues with the crowd through the open windows of the banqueting room, the Weymouth coach draws up opposite and a young Scotsman, Donald Farfrae, overhears the argument as he descends with his luggage. Farfrae writes a note to the mayor offering to show him how to make the grown wheat wholesome. Whereupon a yokel comes running out of the Corn Exchange in broad daylight calling to his friends that Mayor Henchard is taking back the grown wheat, every grain of it.

And so the film goes hurrying on. The impulsive Henchard at once takes to Farfrae and makes him manager of his corn business, much to the disgust of Jopp, Henchard's clerk. Again, impulsively, Henchard decides to take a holiday in Jersey, and to bring back as his wife the elegant Lucetta Templeman, who was his mistress some time before, and whom he would then have married but for fear of committing bigamy. But from this moment his past begins to overtake him. Elizabeth-Jane appears, ushered into his office by the housekeeper, Mrs. Trimlett, and Henchard learns that Susan has brought her to Casterbridge the day before.

So Henchard cancels his visit to Jersey, and instead sends a sum of money to Lucetta. Then to preserve his secret and yet maintain his honour, he woos the ailing Susan and marries her as if for the first time, so that Elizabeth-Jane becomes his step daughter. Soon Susan dies, having found a home for her daughter, and leaving to Mrs. Trimlett the task of helping the girl to find a suitable husband. This series of incidents is compressed within the first twenty minutes of the film, which is unreel'd almost as impulsively as the activation of Henchard's character.

For a short while the lonely Henchard is happy in the company of his gentle daughter and his efficient manager. Then he stumbles on the secret which Susan had confided to Mrs. Trimlett, in a letter to be opened by Henchard on her daughter's wedding day. Henchard's daughter is dead, and this Elizabeth-Jane is the child of Newson the sailor. Henchard at once begins finding fault with the girl, and makes her life a misery. His anger is further roused when Farfrae stands up to him and asserts his authority as manager, attacking Henchard's rash ways. Henchard, for example, befriends old Mrs. Whittle, and at the same time belittles and terrifies her feeble-minded son, Abel, who works in the granary.

Mrs. Trimlett tries to put matters right with a curious ruse that is almost successful. She sends anonymous notes to both Elizabeth-Jane and Farfrae, calling them to a rendezvous outside the town. They meet and solemnly compare notes, and Farfrae's annoyance melts as he talks to the girl. By the time she leaves him, he is beginning to show more than admiration for her simple, direct charm. But the effects of Henchard's past deeds are beginning to take shape.

The flighty Lucetta Templeman travels from Jersey to Casterbridge, having come into a fortune left her by an aunt,



Henchard's House: sketch of an actual building which was to be used for exteriors

and moves into a large house in South Street which she decorates and furnishes with an elegance unusual for Dorset. She has learnt of Susan's death, and is ambitious to succeed her as Henchard's wife. She prevails on the unhappy Elizabeth-Jane to come to live at High Place Hall as her companion, and writes to Henchard that he is welcome to call on his daughter at her new home.

But Elizabeth's first caller is Donald Farfrae, who is quite overcome by Lucetta's charms. From now on, he is Henchard's rival in love as well as in business, for Henchard soon dismisses his manager, and Farfrae sets himself up as a rival corn merchant. When he discovers that Farfrae has jilted Elizabeth and won Lucetta's affection, Henchard determines to smash his business. He learns from a weather prophet that bad weather will ruin the coming harvest and corners the grain market, only to be defeated when good weather intervenes, prices fall, and he, having sunk all his capital in grain purchase, cannot stay the course.

He is forced to sell at a heavy loss, loses all his credit and his goodwill among clients and competitors: he is no longer mayor. Frustrated at every turn, he forces his way one night into High Place Hall and blackmails Lucetta into agreeing to their marriage, calling Elizabeth into the room to witness her consent. Lucetta addresses him by his first name, and Elizabeth begins to suspect the truth about their previous relationship. And now, just at harvest time, the spell of fine weather begins to break as the prophet foretold. On the following morning Henchard is taking the magistrate's court. . . .

IV

SEQUENCE J: HENCHARD'S FALL

FADE IN:

345. EXT. MARKET PLACE. MORNING.

SHOT TOWARDS the Corn Exchange. The sky is cloudy and a gusty wind is blowing the dust. There is occasional rumbling of distant thunder. MRS. TRIMLETT, looking at a shop window, across the road from High Place Hall, turns on being greeted by ELIZABETH, who has only added a bonnet to her indoor dress and her mother's gypsy shawl.

ELIZABETH: (agitated) Mrs. Trimlett!

MRS. TRIMLETT: Goodness, child . . .



The Furmity woman's tent (interior)

ELIZABETH: Do you know where my father is? I must see him.

MRS. TRIMLETT: Why, yes, Miss Elizabeth. He's taking the Magistrate's court this morning.

ELIZABETH: (hurrying on) Oh, thank you, Mrs. Trimlett.

MRS. TRIMLETT: Is there anything wrong? Can I help you?

ELIZABETH-JANE goes, too agitated to say more. MRS. TRIMLETT looks after her, perplexed. There is more distant thunder . . .

346. INT. MAGISTRATE'S COURT (1st FLOOR OF CORN EXCHANGE). DAY.

C. S. HENCHARD is presiding. Beside him is the second Magistrate, who is BINNS, the Bank Manager.

HENCHARD: Well, and what has she been doing?

347. C. S. THE WOMAN standing in the dock in front of him is the OLD HAG who was drunk the night before.

She is the FURMITY WOMAN, wearing a shawl, a sticky black bonnet and a dirty white apron.

348. THREE SHOT:

HENCHARD looks at her as if she reminds him of somebody or something else. BINNS pays attention to STUBBERD, the constable, who is standing in the witness box and speaks in a low voice.

STUBBERD: She is charged, sir, with the offence of disorderly female and nuisance.

349. FULL SHOT OF THE PUBLIC GALLERY.

The VISITORS' section is about half-filled.

ELIZABETH-JANE enters the public gallery with a gust of wind blowing behind her. The wind also enters the windows, stirring the papers and causing a door to slam.

350. TWO SHOT:

HENCHARD, for a moment, looks at the signs of breaking weather while BINNS says:

BINNS: Close the windows back there, please! (to STUBBERD) Proceed.

351. MID SHOT:

The CLERK, in foreground, dips his pen in the ink and STUBBERD goes on:

STUBBERD: Hearing a' illegal noise I went down the street at twenty-five minutes past eleven p.m. on the night of the fifth instant, Hannah Dominy. When I had . . .

CLERK: No so fast, Stubberd.

STUBBERD waits until the CLERK has stopped writing and then continues:

STUBBERD: . . . reached the church I saw defendant at another spot, namely, the gutter.

He pauses, watching the clerk's pen.

CLERK: Gutter, yes, Stubberd.

STUBBERD: Spot measuring twelve feet nine or thereabouts from where I—



The Council Chamber at Casterbridge

STUBBERD pulls up again for the CLERK'S sake, upon which the FURMITY WOMAN breaks in with:

352. C.S. FURMITY WOMAN:

FURMITY WOMAN: I object to that—"spot measuring twelve feet nine or thereabouts from where I"—it's not sound testimony.

353. GROUP SHOT:

HENCHARD: Certainly it is.

BINNS: Certainly.

STUBBERD: . . . was standing myself. She was wambling about quite dangerous to the thoroughfare and when I approached to draw near, she committed the nuisance and insulted me.

HENCHARD: Yes. What did she say?

STUBBERD: She said: "Put away that dee lantern", she says.

FURMITY WOMAN: I object. I wasn't capable enough to hear what I said. And what's said out of my hearing is not evidence.

HENCHARD: Go on, Stubberd.

354. C.S. STUBBERD:

STUBBERD: Says she: "Dost hear, old turmit-head? Put away that dee lantern. I've floored fellows a dee sight finer-looking than a dee fool like thee, you son of a bee, dee if I hain't", she says.

355. C.S. HENCHARD:

HENCHARD: (impatiently) Come—we don't want to hear any more of them cust D's and B's! (turning to the FURMITY WOMAN) Now then, have you got anything to say?

356. C.S. FURMITY WOMAN:

FURMITY WOMAN: Yes. Twenty years ago or thereabouts, I was aselling of furmity in a tent at Weydon Fair—

357. THREE SHOT:

CLERK: "Twenty years ago!" That's beginning at the beginning! Suppose you go back to the Creation!

He looks at HENCHARD wanting him to intervene but HENCHARD, to BINNS'S surprise, neither moves nor speaks. There is something in the immobility of him that arouses EVERYONE'S attention.

358. M.S. THE FURMITY WOMAN: in the foreground, never takes her eyes off HENCHARD, speaking with more and more sharpness and bitterness. Behind her the onlookers, realising that they are about to witness a sensation. One group prominent among them consists of MOTHER CUX-SOM, NANCE MOCKRIDGE, CONEY, POACHER, OLD IDLER and TOOTHLESS DRUNKARD.

FURMITY WOMAN: A man and woman with a little child came into my tent. They sat down and had a basin of my broth. Ah, Lord's my life. I was of a more respectable station in the world then, being a land smuggler in a large way of business.

359. **GROUP SHOT of ONLOOKERS, ELIZABETH-JANE IN FOREGROUND**
The IDLERS laugh and make comments.
360. **THREE SHOT:**
CLERK: Quiet in court.
BINNS: I must ask you not to take up the Court's time with irrelevant matters.
HENCHARD stares in the direction of the FURMITY WOMAN.
361. **C.S. FURMITY WOMAN:**
FURMITY WOMAN: I've a right to speak in my own defence. And no man shall stop me.
362. **GROUP SHOT: THE ONLOOKERS:**
This remark increases the feeling that they are in for a treat and they are not going to be cheated out of it. One of them, CONEY, slips out of the courtroom, while NANCE MOCKRIDGE shouts:
NANCE MOCKRIDGE: Hear, hear! Let her say what she has to say!
363. **C.S. THE CLERK** is clutching at his papers blown by the ever-increasing wind:
CLERK: Quiet!
364. **EXT. MAGISTRATE'S COURT. DAY.**
FULL SHOT: with FURMITY WOMAN speaking in foreground.
In the background CONEY is beckoning his FRIENDS from the doorway.
FURMITY WOMAN: I used to season my furmity with rum for them who asked for it.
Laughter in court.
365. **C.S. CLERK:**
CLERK: Quiet in Court! Please keep that door shut!
366. **C.S. THE DOORWAY.**
The CROWD of NEWCOMERS is gathered around the door. An ATTENDANT is trying to shut it, but someone is pushing and pushing from outside. Finally MRS. TRIMLETT, hot and indignant, manages to enter. We PAN with her to show her forcing her way through the crowd to finally sit down beside ELIZABETH-JANE.
367. **TWO SHOT:**
ELIZABETH-JANE is gazing in the direction of the FURMITY WOMAN with a look of perplexity. MRS. TRIMLETT watches her alarmed—
368. **C.S. FURMITY WOMAN:**
FURMITY WOMAN: And I season the man's furmity with rum and he had more and more; till at last he quarrelled with his wife and offered to sell her to the highest bidder!
369. **C.S. HENCHARD:** reacting at the revelation of his secret.
FURMITY WOMAN'S VOICE: A kindly sailor came in and bid five guineas and paid the money and led her away.
370. **C.S. FURMITY WOMAN:**
FURMITY WOMAN: And the man who sold his wife in that fashion is the man sitting up there in the great big chair!
She concludes by nodding her head at HENCHARD and folding her arms.
371. **C.U. BINNS**, looking at HENCHARD.
372. **CLOSE GROUP SHOT:** The sensation-hungry crowd.
373. **TWO SHOT:**
ELIZABETH-JANE, touching the gypsy shawl, aghast. MRS. TRIMLETT, trying to make her leave.
374. **C.U. THE CLERK**, speechless. He turns to look up at HENCHARD.
375. **C.U. HENCHARD**, staring in front of him. PAN to include BINNS, still looking at HENCHARD, but when no defence is forthcoming, he turns to the FURMITY WOMAN:
BINNS: We don't want to hear your life and adventures. You've been asked if you've anything to say bearing on the case.
376. **FULL SHOT: DOCK IN FOREGROUND AND MAGISTRATE'S BENCH. CLERK'S TABLE BELOW:**
FURMITY WOMAN: That bears on the case. It proves that he's no better than I, and has no right to sit there in judgment upon me.
CLERK: 'Tis a concocted story. So hold your tongue.
There is a pause, and then:
377. **C.U. HENCHARD:** speaking slowly.
HENCHARD: No—'tis true. 'Tis true as the light. And upon my soul, it does prove that I'm no better than she! And to keep out of temptation to treat her hard for revenge. I'll leave her to you.
378. **FULL SHOT: FROM BEHIND HENCHARD:**
Sensation in court! HENCHARD leaves the chair, steps down from the dais and walks towards the door.
379. **TWO SHOT:**
ELIZABETH-JANE'S reaction of horror at the news she has just learnt. Unable to bear the sneering faces of the people around her, she at last allows MRS. TRIMLETT to lead her away, and we PAN with her as she runs up to the doorway of the gallery. MRS. TRIMLETT trots after her.
380. **FULL SHOT:**
In the background BINNS is hammering for silence. The CLERK jumps up and down. To the left HENCHARD passes the turbulent CROWD OF ONLOOKERS and disappears through the doorway of the Court.
381. **INT. 1st FLOOR LANDING, CORN EXCHANGE, DAY.**
VISITORS are pouring out of the door to the public gallery, all talking at the top of their voices. ELIZABETH-JANE is swept on among them, followed by MRS. TRIMLETT.



Mrs. Trimlett watches Henchard at his safe



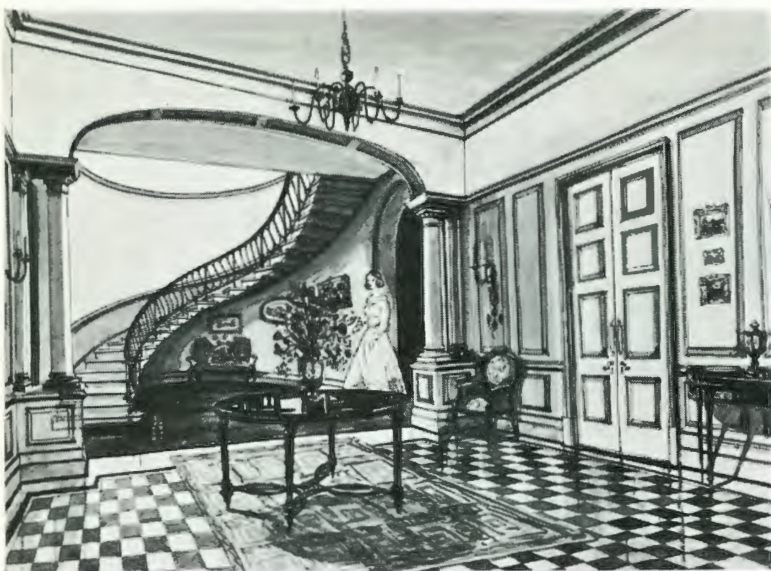
The tap room of the King's Arms, Casterbridge



Exterior; an evening view of the Town Centre, seen from the direction of High Place Hall

- VOICES: Old Mag's let the cat out of the bag proper! . . . That's brought him down a peg or two! . . . There's the fine folks for you! . . . 'Tis the finish of "His Worship" I'll be bound! . . . He'll never get out of that one! . . .
- POACHER: And him locking me up for a harmless bit of poaching . . .
382. GROUND FLOOR. CORN EXCHANGE. DAY.
TWO SHOT on HALF-LANDING: MRS. TRIMLETT pulls ELIZABETH-JANE into the corner. ELIZABETH-JANE tries to free herself.
MRS. TRIMLETT: Don't go after him!
ELIZABETH: Let me go!
MRS. TRIMLETT: He doesn't deserve your love! Listen, child . . .
ELIZABETH: Hasn't he been kind to you always? And now you turn against him, like the rest of them. Let me go!
MRS. TRIMLETT: Listen, child, you must listen, he . . .
ELIZABETH: (freeing herself and running downstairs) You don't know what he means to me—!
Over the last words they become suddenly aware of the dead silence that has fallen on the CROWD.
383. EXT. ROAD UNDER CORN EXCHANGE ARCHWAY. DAY.
FULL SHOT: The silent CROWD gives way as HENCHARD walks from the far end of the arch past the entrance to the Corn Exchange room towards the Market Place. As he passes the foot of the stairs, ELIZABETH-JANE runs down and follows him. CAMERA PANS with them. HENCHARD is halted at the entrance to the archway by the torrential rain which is falling. There is a flash of lightning.
384. TWO SHOT: HENCHARD and ELIZABETH-JANE. There is a terrifying clap of thunder overhead. She puts her hand on his arm as he begins to move forward.
385. EXT. MARKET PLACE. DAY.
It echoes with the sound of broken glass, the stampede of people and beasts . . .
HENCHARD walks out into the rain.
386. INT. ROAD UNDER ARCHWAY. DAY.
MRS. TRIMLETT comes up alongside ELIZABETH-JANE.
ELIZABETH: Father, take care! Father! !
387. EXT. MARKET PLACE. FROM ELIZABETH-JANE'S P.O.V.
HENCHARD, walking heavily, aimlessly along the market place through flying bits of canvas. Cattle stampede past him . . .
388. INT. ROAD UNDER ARCHWAY. DAY.
ELIZABETH-JANE runs after HENCHARD, ignoring MRS. TRIMLETT'S warning shouts:
MRS. TRIMLETT: Miss Elizabeth! . . . Come back, child!
389. EXT. MARKET PLACE. DAY.
ELIZABETH-JANE catches up with HENCHARD near the "Casterbridge Chronicle" office and starts dragging him towards it for shelter.
ELIZABETH: Father, father! You'll catch your death! Please, father . . .
We PAN as she drags him towards the "Chronicle" office. HENCHARD, dazed, hardly knowing what is happening to him, follows her unwillingly. Another flash of lightning . . .
390. TWO SHOT: A clap of thunder.
ELIZABETH-JANE presses HENCHARD close against the "Chronicle" office window where they are sheltered under the overhanging roof. She stares at the ashen face.
ELIZABETH: Don't take it to heart so, father—you didn't know what you were doing—you were drinking—I forgive you—Oh, father, let me come back and look after you!
HENCHARD seems not to hear and his eyes look as though into space.
391. EXT. LARGE BEDROOM WINDOW. HIGH PLACE HALL. DAY.
LUCETTA in a dressing gown, and MARTHA, just behind the window. MARTHA, dressed in street clothes, is talking rapidly while pointing to the Corn Exchange. LUCETTA listens with alarm.
392. EXT. "CASTERBRIDGE CHRONICLE" WINDOW. DAY.
ELIZABETH-JANE, standing in front of HENCHARD to shelter him, throws the gypsy shawl around his shoulders. Thus they stand while:
393. C.U. WINDOW bangs—
394. C.U. Glass breaking—
395. C.U. Someone shuts a window—

396. **FULL SHOT: AS FROM 1ST FLOOR CORN EXCHANGE**
The Market Place lies deserted, beaten by rain, storm and thunder. In the background, HENCHARD and ELIZABETH-JANE, pressed against the "Chronicle" window. A hooded man (WEATHER PROPHET) walks slowly in their direction.
397. **C.S. TRACKING:** The hooded man, passing HENCHARD and ELIZABETH-JANE, stops by them for a moment. As he turns to HENCHARD, we recognise his profile—it is the WEATHER PROPHET.
WEATHER PROPHET: A bad harvest, Mr. Henchard—what did I tell you—
He moves on . . .
A man, carrying a big umbrella, his shoulders covered by a cape hurries into shot to take shelter. We recognise him as a DEALER at the Corn Exchange. The WEATHER PROPHET is seen walking away in the background.
CORN DEALER: Henchard! Have you any wheat to offer? I can take 200 quarters and I'll pay you five shillings more than this morning's price!
HENCHARD looks at him blankly until a very faint and bitter smile crosses his features.
HENCHARD: I haven't got a sack left—not one single sack!
The DEALER runs out of shot. ELIZABETH-JANE looks at her father miserably.
CAMERA TRACKS a little sideways just excluding them and including the latest edition of the newspaper displayed in the window.
398. **PROCESS SHOT:**
CAMERA singles out the current corn price—36/-d. To the accompaniment of the storm, prices begin to soar—Go up and up and up—
399. **EXT. HENCHARD'S GRANARY. DAY.**
It is empty.
400. **EXT. PASTURE LAND. DAY.**
FARMERS on a field trying to round up panic-stricken horses and cattle—
401. **EXT. CORNFIELDS—DAY.**
Flattened—
402. **EXT. A BARN. DAY.**
FARMERS and their MEN impotently watching the raging of the elements—
403. **PROCESS SHOT: RESUME 398.**
The still rising figures of prices, reaching 60/-d. and more.
404. **INT. HENCHARD'S INNER OFFICE. NIGHT.**
HENCHARD is working at his desk by lamplight. Rain is beating against the window. He looks up, listening at the sound of someone opening the door of the outer office and coming through. It is ELIZABETH-JANE who enters.
ELIZABETH: Father, it's Mr. Binns from the bank.
HENCHARD: Show him in, then, child.
HENCHARD begins to rise to his feet. BINNS, very wet, enters and ELIZABETH goes out closing the door.
HENCHARD: Good evening, Binns. What brings you here?
BINNS: Evening, Mr. Henchard. It's a bit unusual, but . . .
HENCHARD: (ironically) Well, it's very tactful anyway, coming up after dark. What's on your mind.
BINNS: (a trifle embarrassed) It's the cheque you've given Mr. Tubber. There's nothing in your account and you've no further security to offer.
HENCHARD: Did he try to cash it?
BINNS: Not yet.
HENCHARD: Damn it, man. What about my good will? I'll pay a high percentage on a loan.
BINNS: I'm sorry, Mr. Henchard. My directors won't hear of it—now.
HENCHARD: (bitterly) You mean since I resigned as Magistrate?
BINNS: (Nodding his head) I'm afraid so.
HENCHARD: (A sudden idea striking him) Supposing I prove to your Board that a lady with private means has done me the honour to become engaged to me?
BINNS: (brightening up) I had no idea, Henchard.
HENCHARD: It's a secret as yet. But I can bring you proof.
- BINNS: Best proof would be if you married her!
HENCHARD: Look, man, I don't want to touch Miss . . . the lady's money. 'Tis not my way. All I want is a fortnight's credit on the strength of our engagement—no more! What d'ye say?
BINNS: Well, as it's you, I'll see what can be done. But you must prove your engagement. And believe me, the sooner the better!
405. **INT. OUTSIDE OF SIDE DOOR. (DOUBLE-CLAD) HIGH PLACE HALL. MORNING. RAIN.**
It is raining hard. MARTHA opens the door.
MARTHA: (apprehensively) Good morning, sir.
CAMERA EASES BACK to show HENCHARD standing there.
HENCHARD: Good morning. Miss Templeman?
MARTHA: She's gone away for a few days, sir.
HENCHARD: Where has she gone?
MARTHA: (hesitatingly) I can't tell you that, sir.
HENCHARD: Is there a secret to it? She must have left an address in case of an emergency.
MARTHA is taken unawares and her jaw drops; and her look betrays confirmation.
HENCHARD walks along the passage to the servants' quarters.
406. **INT. KITCHEN. HIGH PLACE HALL. MORNING. SHOOTING FROM BESIDE FIREPLACE TOWARDS THE DOOR.**
HENCHARD goes straight over to the mantelpiece on which is propped a piece of paper bearing the address in LUCETTA'S handwriting. CAMERA PANS, including and excluding again the COOK, to the piece of paper. It reads: "THE INN, PRIORBURY".
HENCHARD'S VOICE: Is that where your mistress is staying?
COOK'S VOICE: Yes, sir.
407. **EXT. PRIORBURY HIGH STREET. DAY. (RAIN L.T.) (ABBOTSBURY LOCATION) L.S. PANNING:** HENCHARD gallops down the lane into the High Street. At the corner a signpost points up the lane along which he is coming and saying "Casterbridge". CAMERA PANS HENCHARD across to the Inn. A MALE SERVANT is scrubbing the doorstep.
408. **M.S.**
HENCHARD: (on horseback) Is there a Miss Templeman staying here?
SERVANT: Yes, sir. Yes, sir.
HENCHARD: Is she in?
SERVANT: No, sir. She's not in. You're a bit late, sir, aren't you?
HENCHARD: Late? What are you talking about?
SERVANT: Why, she's at the church already.
He points off to his right. CAMERA PULLS BACK into the middle of the road showing HENCHARD riding off down the High Street towards the church.
409. **EXT. PRIORBURY CHURCH. DAY. (RAIN L.T.) (ABBOTSBURY LOCATION.)**
CRANE OR LIFT SHOT: A battered old carriage is standing outside, wet and muddy. Its driver (CARRIAGE DRIVER) looks curiously at the latecomer. HENCHARD rides up and jumps off his horse, hitches the reins to a rail and climbs the steep path to the church. As he goes CAMERA RISES to the level of the churchyard at the top of the path.
410. **INT. PRIORBURY CHURCH. DAY.**
TRACKING AND PANNING. HENCHARD pushes his way in. The rainy weather makes the light inside very dim. We hear low voices. HENCHARD crosses the nave, CAMERA PANNING with him, and walks up the side aisle, CAMERA TRACKING beside him. When he reaches the corner to the side chapel, he sees pin-points of candle-light on the side altar. There, within a few feet of him, a very intimate marriage ceremony is taking place. A CLERGYMAN is marrying LUCETTA to DONALD. TUBBER is best man.
CLERGYMAN: . . . to be your lawful-wedded husband?
LUCETTA: I do.
HENCHARD, sick at heart, leans against the corner of the side chapel for a few moments . . . the shock is so great



High Place Hall; two interiors; the staircase and the drawing room

that he scarcely realises where he is. CAMERA PANS AND TRACKS with him when, paying no attention to the noise he is making, he walks rapidly, unsteadily back to the church door. He seems hardly to notice how and where he is going.

411. EXT. PRIORBURY CHURCH. DAY. (RAIN L.T.) (ABBOTSBURY LOCATION.)

CRANE OR LIFT SHOT: Somehow HENCHARD climbs on his horse, spurs it on recklessly. TRACKING AND PANNING ENDS ON C.U. of CARRIAGE DRIVER who watches him with dismay.

412. EXT. PRIORBURY HIGH STREET. DAY. (RAIN L.T.) (ABBOTSBURY LOCATION.)

C.S. THE MALE SERVANT is polishing the brass work. He hears the sound of a galloping horse and looks down the road.

413. L.S. The signpost, pointing off left across the screen. Beneath the sign, HENCHARD is seen galloping along the road TOWARDS CAMERA but going off right past the Inn, ignoring the "Casterbridge" turning.

414. BIG C.U. HENCHARD in a daze, letting the horse take him where it will.

415. EXT. DORSET LANDSCAPES. DAY. (RAIN L.T.) (EGGERDON HEATH LOCATIONS.) (SHOT TO BE REVERSED IN OPTICAL PRINTER.)

A Coach-and-Four is speeding along the Eggerdon Heath landscape (right to left geographically). HENCHARD, on his maddened horse, overtakes the coach.

416. C.U. HENCHARD, losing strength, begins to look distracted. Boughs of trees strike across his face.

417. TRACKING: FROM HENCHARD'S P.O.V. Overhanging trees, passing ABOVE CAMERA.

418. BIG C.U. HENCHARD, still more feeble. He looks ahead, faintly recognising something.

419. TRACKING: FROM HENCHARD'S P.O.V. CAMERA TURNING SLOW FOR EFFECT OF QUICK MOTION: The narrow lane down which he is galloping. Something blocks the way, something which is blurred as yet.

420. L.S. In foreground the narrow lane and a large farm waggon which blocks it completely. Horse and rider gallop towards the wagon.

421. C.S. TRACKING: HENCHARD. TRYING TO PULL UP HIS HORSE.

422. C.U. The horse's head being pulled back by HENCHARD.

423. RESUME 419. CAMERA starts on roadway, PANS UP the approaching cart horse and waggon on to the trees.

424. C.S. HENCHARD on his horse which rears up on its hind legs.

425. BIG C.U. of the EGGERDON FARMER on his waggon, taut with anxiety.

426. FROM EGGERDON FARMER'S P.O.V. HENCHARD'S horse calming down. HENCHARD, still in the saddle, completely exhausted and unaware of what is happening. There is a pause, then he rolls off his horse into the muddy lane.

FADE OUT:

V

In planning the foregoing sequence, our intention was to stage the trial of the Furmity woman in the old Shire Court at Dorchester where Judge Jeffreys held the Bloody Assize after the Monmouth rebellion of 1685. This court is still used by the magistrates of Dorchester, and when we walked in there last year a person was being charged with committing a nuisance on the public highway, and was fined accordingly. The well-proportioned court room is unchanged except in the arrangements for lighting and heating, and the dais, the raised dock, the raised jury boxes and the sloping public gallery at the back form a singularly photogenic series of compositions.

We had begun our researches with the idea of using genuine exteriors and interiors wherever possible. We had, in fact, determined to adopt the blunt, realistic style of photography that such a policy dictates. For example, there could be no shot from behind the magistrate towards the dock with HENCHARD'S head dominating the small, defiant figure of the Furmity Woman beyond. It is physically impossible to set the camera between the judge's chair and the wall behind it, and the chair has a high, broad back which would block any view.

But the loss entailed in abandoning any dexterity in the use of the camera would be offset by the genuine character of the objects and backgrounds photographed. To tamper with that character in order to display photographic ingenuity would be to pander to synthetic and conventional values at the expense of solid conviction. It is interesting to note that the studio production staff decided it would be cheaper to build

a set in the studio and shoot the scene as part of the studio schedule than to transport additional technicians, with lamps and mobile generators, to Dorchester in order to make the interior scene in the Shire Court at the same time as the location work around the town.

This style of authenticity naturally has to be carried through every scene whether in the studio or on location. In the studio, for instance, small rooms were to be kept small: there could be no full length human figures seen in a cottage interior, as there were in the echoing kitchens of the miners' cottages in *How Green Was My Valley*. We planned to relate the scale of the whole film to real life and so to give visual conviction to the elaborate and colourful events of Hardy's story.

At the point where the excerpt from the screenplay ends, the novel presented us with our greatest problem. Hardy does not show Henchard stumbling on Lucetta's marriage ceremony; he keeps a strict geographical unity and scarcely ever lets the action stray out of the town of Casterbridge. But at this point in his narrative there occurs enough material for many reels of film. Henchard's bankruptcy and the readjustment of his life to his straitened circumstances occupy several chapters, for Hardy is little more than half way through his story: but we have used up four fifths of our screen time.

I do not suggest that we time ourselves to so many pages in writing a film script, but we do acquire a sense of balance which sounds a note of warning when we begin to overtax the spectator's staying power. In our first drafts of the script the remaining action was proportionately twice as long, in fact one third of the total length. With ruthless cutting we eliminated two sequences from the last five, and redistributed their essential values through the remaining three sequences.

On the face of it, an audience might think that Fate had slapped Henchard hard enough by the time he had fallen from his horse, sick with fever and disappointment. But that is not Hardy's way. Our problem was that we had been forced to develop the dramatic tension so far by this point that it was difficult to keep tension mounting steadily still higher to the end. The remainder of the screenplay covers the following ground.

VI

Some weeks later Henchard returns to Casterbridge wearing a beard, but otherwise unchanged since his illness. Passing his former house and granary, which now bears Farfrae's name, he comes to St. Peter's church and reads a notice headed *All Saints' Day*, 1841. The space of twenty-one years has passed. Reading a tattered poster announcing the enforced auction of his own estate by order of the Bankruptcy Court, Henchard enters the taproom of the King's Arms and "busts out drinking again". The church choir and orchestra come in for their half-pints after morning service, and he forces them to sing the curses from the 109th psalm.

As they finish singing, news comes of the death of Dr. Chalkfield, Henchard's successor as mayor. Within a few days Farfrae is elected in his place. As an ironic joke, Henchard calls on Farfrae and receives permission to remove some papers from his own safe in what had been his dining-room; these are the letters written him by Lucetta from Jersey after she had become his mistress. Lucetta now, from the other side of the door, hears Henchard reading them to the unsuspecting Farfrae, and he, aware of her presence, plays cat and mouse with her for revenge, without going so far as to reveal to Farfrae the writer's identity.

Next day, Henchard at her request returns the letters to Lucetta, who burns them. But one of the most incriminating has got into the hands of the gossips round the parish pump, and they choose to make an example of the mayoress. They revive an old custom: they pick a night when Farfrae is to be out of town on business, and stage a skimmity ride, a pagan, drunken orgy in which they lead a donkey round the town with effigies of Lucetta and Henchard bound to it back to back.

Lucetta is pregnant, and the shock of the scandal brings on a seizure. Henchard gallops off to fetch Farfrae, but they have lately quarrelled again, and Farfrae believes Henchard's news to be a trap and refuses to return with him; by the time he does arrive home, the doctor's ministrations and Elizabeth's nursing have been in vain. Lucetta is dead.

Henchard comes to the house to offer his condolences and to ask Elizabeth-Jane to leave town with him for good. But this is too much for Mrs. Trimlett; she reveals to Elizabeth that her father is not Henchard, but Newson, the sailor, so that she has no obligation to Henchard.

Henchard leaves Casterbridge as he had come twenty-one years before, penniless and carrying only the tools of his trade. Abel Whittle alone shows him kindness, draping his overcoat over Henchard's bowed shoulders because of his former kindness to his mother.

VII

Even more than the novel, the screenplay concentrates on the awkward, rugged, impulsive character of Michael Henchard. It is unthinkable that any but a robust Englishman should play it. The three other principal characters are well contrasted and rewarding parts, Lucetta in particular covering a wide range of comedy, pathos, and at the end tragedy. The Scot, Donald Farfrae—short, fair, fresh and slenderly handsome, rather solemn in manner—is a fine, exasperating opponent for Henchard. He and Lucetta provoke the comedy, although everything that Henchard does should be done, too, with a sense of humour. Elizabeth-Jane is the most difficult character; she is the least colourful, and on the surface submissive, and it is a long term job to bring out her character and to create sympathy for her. The part needs disciplined and intelligent playing to sustain it against the obvious dramatic opportunities of the other three.

This could be a rich, meaty, absorbing meal of a film. It is impossible to convey more than a bare summary in these notes where there has been no space to mention the two royal events: the rival entertainments organised by Henchard and Farfrae in honour of the marriage of Queen Victoria, and the visit of the Prince Consort, who spares twenty minutes (on his way to Weymouth) to hear an address of welcome from the new mayor, Farfrae. (This presentation is interrupted by the drunken Henchard, who later challenges Farfrae to fight and nearly kills him.)

It seems useless to compromise on, or pare down, a subject like this. Such a study of community life needs adequate scope and settings. On the other hand, it is demoralising to embark on an enterprise that is foredoomed to financial failure. And since taxation and exploitation add five times to the cost of production (so that the public has to pay sixpence before each pennyworth of produced film is paid for), an ambitious film is a luxury and a gamble that the markets available to the average British film cannot justify.

TELEVISION AND CINEMA

René Clair

M. THIERS' OPINION on the future of the railways, and Mme. de Sevigné's on that of Racine and of coffee, provide salutary warnings for amateur prophets. It would be rash to speak of the distant future of television (a future which will be determined as much by technical progress as by economic and social conditions), but it is perhaps worthwhile considering its immediate future—that is to say, what will later be thought of as its first age.

Television, one fears, is not aware of the growing pains which the sound cinema knew so well. We remember the period of *The Jazz Singer*, and the enthusiasm of certain good people always ready to throw themselves wholeheartedly upon any novelty. It seemed then that everything achieved by the cinema, during thirty years rich in invention and exciting discovery, was to be thrown overboard because a sound came from a loud-speaker at the moment when Al Jolson opened his mouth. We know the result of this venture, and it is enough to see again *Intolerance*, *The Pilgrim* or *Greed* to realise that the essential quality of the cinema had emerged before 1927, and that if the essence and not the form is considered, the progress made since this time appears only secondary.

Television can bring to the screen, on the one hand, scenes directly transmitted (that is to say, at the very moment when they are happening); and on the other, scenes previously filmed. "Direct" television is far superior to the ordinary film when concerned with events of news value, and the success in the United States of televised sports events proves that, in the field of actuality, television has already justified itself.

But in presenting a dramatically written work, performed by actors, the use of "direct" television calls for some reservations. Here the idea of actuality plays no part. If I see Laurence Olivier in *Hamlet*, for instance, it is unimportant for me to know that the grave-digging scene is being played twenty miles away from me (direct television), or that it was played twenty days ago (televised film).

In either case, what I see is only a shadow projected on a screen, what I hear is only a sound reproduced by a loud-speaker, and the sum total is only a dateless work of imagination. If I am told that there is a considerable difference between a picture directly transmitted, and one filmed first and then televised, I answer that this is due to a purely technical imperfection, which will undoubtedly be corrected later. The example of radio shows us that it is very difficult to distinguish between a direct and a recorded programme, and television technicians who are prepared to deride a system because of this difference between two types of recording seem to me to surrender to an illusion as childish as it is dangerous.

The danger stems from the same desire to throw everything overboard that jeopardized the very existence of the art of the cinema in the first days of sound. But this danger would not exist if "direct" television had achieved the same degree of technical subtlety and realised the same possibilities as the cinema. This it has not and probably never will. To pretend the opposite is to ignore the vital importance of film editing. A dramatic film of average length contains several hundred different shots, whose assembly gives to the film its rhythm and style. But the technical conditions of "direct" television, which do not allow this luxury of many shots, tend to limit a television spectacle to a semi-theatrical convention from which it will be difficult later to escape. Television is a new means of *transmission*, but nothing to date has encouraged us to find in it a means of *expression* with which we were not already familiar.

Let no one assume that I am adopting here the attitude of those who see in the cinema only a means for reproducing the theatre. A drama composed of live actors moving in a static set is subject to different laws from a drama made up of animated shadows, when the mobility and the multiplicity of settings are unlimited. If there are fundamental differences between theatre and cinema, such differences do not seem to exist between cinema and television. The television screen shows us nothing which the cinema screen cannot show.

Let us ask a small effort of imagination from those who persist in believing in the virtues, for me illusory, of "direct" television. Let us suppose that television exists and that the cinema does not exist (which, in the disorder which governs inventions, would have been possible). One day, we might read this in a paper :—

"A new invention is going to overthrow television. From now on it will be possible to include in a television drama innumerable scenes and an infinite variety of shots. Action will pass in an instant from a drawing room to a street, from the sea to the mountains, from Europe to America. It will be possible, as well as all this, to make any necessary corrections to television scenes after they have been taken, to lengthen this, to cut that, to change the order of scenes, to give them a definitive form. Finally, and this is not the least remarkable, the television drama can be reproduced as many times as we want, like a simple photograph.

"This invention takes the form of a reel of celluloid called 'film' which is run through a piece of apparatus that its inventors, two young men called Auguste and Louis Lumière, have called a 'cinematograph'. In a few years time all televised dramas will be 'filmed' before being diffused by wireless waves.

"The invention of the 'Cinematograph' is the greatest advance which has been made since the first experiments in television".

Film of the Month

ALL ABOUT EVE

Richard Winnington



Margo flattered: Anne Baxter, Gary Merrill, Bette Davis (Margo), Celeste Holm, Hugh Marlowe

DARRYL ZANUCK HAS MADE 20th Century the most prolific of the Hollywood studios. His reputation for courage and dash has been carefully nurtured and spread since the days when he was a genuine innovator, and made gangster films out of newspaper reports. Nobody accepts this legend more wholeheartedly than Darryl F. Zanuck, whose true distinction none the less is a flair for instantly spotting the first stirring of an original impulse and steering it with all the air of a revolutionary into safe commercial channels. To this purpose Zanuck has enlisted some of Hollywood's best talent. With Louis de Rochemont's *Boomerang* he inaugurated the candid-camera sociological theme which, with de Rochemont out of the way, degenerated into *Kiss of Death* and *Call Northside 777*. *Pinky* drew all the sting out of the colour bar film and made it safe for Democracy and the box-office.

In the genuine, if mild, post-war renaissance of Hollywood Zanuck has played no part. His function is to be daring one beat after the moment has passed, to catch an idea on the rebound, to offend nobody—except maybe those who saw the idea before it bounced. Such a gift, allied to a devoted self-



Critic and Climber: George Sanders, Anne Baxter

belief, will guarantee anybody a top place in the contemporary world of near-Art. Darryl Zanuck has it.

20th Century's *A Letter to Three Wives* was the début of Joseph L. Mankiewicz as writer-director, and the best American comedy of 1949. It was a mere shadow of those acid Hollywood comedies of the thirties, but it had a supply of ironies and made a certain alkaline comment on present-day American customs and manners. It was in general over-written and under-directed—the laughs being predominantly verbal and the structure literary.

Mankiewicz's new film *All About Eve* makes a grandiose effect of being very cynical and very sophisticated about the New York stage, and it has been accepted at its face value by a large part of the American press and the American public. (Its chances at the British box-offices are perhaps not so good.) *All About Eve* cannot truly be compared with *Sunset Boulevard*, which looked detachedly at a tragedy of a silent film star who has outlived her fame, and wrung from it an acrid pictorial sort of poetry. Mankiewicz's film is an emotional backstage drama from within, studded with glib Coward-Arlen epigrams and so starved of visual substance that nearly the whole weight of its 2 hours 18 minutes falls on the shoulders of one player—Bette Davis. It will leave nobody any wiser (or sadder) about the New York or any other stage.

The near opening shot of Eve Harrington (Anne Baxter) receiving the Sarah Siddons award for the best acting of the year in a well-presented scene, is frozen while the five "friends" she is about to thank in her speech take up in turn a flashback account of her career. This goes back to a year before, when, as a stage-struck fan in a cheap mackintosh, Eve is led wide-eyed into the dressing room of her idol and leading New York actress, Margo Channing (Bette Davis).

This first sequence of the recapitulation is promising. Margo, removing her make-up, scoffs viciously at the worshipping intruder until the latter shyly tells her sob-story of devotion and war-widowhood. The moment when the hard façade of the exhibitionist actress melts into sentimentality and tears contains a comment on theatre people not to be matched in any of the subsequent passages. It also establishes that authority that Bette Davis exhibits throughout the film.

Present and equally affected by this pathetic confession are Margo's director and lover (Gary Merrill) her playwright



Star and Dresser: Bette Davis, Thelma Ritter

(Hugh Marlowe) and his wife (Celeste Holm), the discoverer of Eve. Sole abstainer and heretic is Thelma Ritter, now typed for ever as a distiller of hardbitten female repartee, Eve is established as Margo's friend, secretary and helpmeet and it is clear to the initiated eye that she is a slut who will bite every hand that feeds her.

In next to no time she is attempting to seduce the director and getting herself fixed up as Margo's understudy by a system of lying and blackmail that could hardly suffice in a milieu so jealously alerted to the stab-in-the-back. To substantiate the hypnotic powers of deception to which all her hardboiled victims pay such ready tribute, she should have for the audience something of the morbid lure of a Becky Sharp. Miss Baxter's guile, after its first exposure, is transparent, tedious and repetitive. It is not within her power to salvage the part as Bette Davis so brilliantly does with that of Margo.

As the ageing actress fearful of losing her younger lover,

the latter is jealous, tormented, hysterical and vain, full of theatrical emotion but always warmly sympathetic; perhaps too consciously "courageous" in lending herself to unflattering lighting and make-up, but always in absolute command of a very great talent. This she demonstrates at its fullest when, without a word but with a whole range of expression, she moves about in the theatre foyer while the villainous dramatic critic maliciously extols the brilliance of the understudy she rightly suspects of designs on her lover as on her career.

The dramatic critic, played by George Sanders at his sleekest in an astrakhan collar, is a favourite Hollywood stereotype, and it is he who purrs out the juiciest epigrams while deliberately advancing the career of Eve, and in turn blackmailing her into accepting his advances: ("We are very much alike, we have talent, unlimited ambition and no human feelings. We deserve each other".) Not only does he consolidate the plushy unrealism of the atmosphere but, together with Eve, he serves to emphasise by contrast the essential golden-heartedness of a bunch of abnormally (for a film) articulate troupers.

They are, Miss Davis and the wisecracks aside, conventional film types, just as the film is a conventional backstage story, despite its pretensions. For Margo's dream which underneath the grease-paint is just like any other girl's—of a fireside and a man coming home to it—comes true; and Celeste Holm, who was highest on Eve's list for liquidation, keeps her man, who was Eve's most gullible customer. And to keep realism further at bay Mankiewicz has seen fit to annexe a clever-clever epilogue in which Eve, alone on her night of triumph with the Sarah Siddons trophy, is offered and falls for the exact line she worked on Margo by another young fan, also a slut, thus presenting us with poetic justice in action.

All *About Eve* is in essence a play fabricated into celluloid with absolutely no feeling for pictorial style or form. Yet one is not surprised to hear Mankiewicz cited as the writer-director of the year. The film has just the sort of surface glitter that dazzles the eyes of the selection committee of the Academy of Motion Picture Art. It will undoubtedly add to Darryl Zanuck's conviction that Art pays off.

OTHER NEW FILMS

Mio Figlio Professore

IT IS, PERHAPS, A PITY that the first film of Renato Castellani to be shown publicly in this country should be the four year-old *Mio Figlio Professore*—which, pleasing and skilful though much of it is, lacks the sustained bite and polish of his later *Sotto Il Sole di Roma* and *E'Primavera*. (The latter, by the way, would surely do well in London.) Its story, covering twenty years, is of a school porter (Aldo Fabrizi) whose wife dies in childbirth, and who concentrates all his affection and hope upon his son. The son grows up to be a professor, nice but a little priggish, and eventually teaches at the school where his father is still porter. Though delighted to be near him again, the old man leaves his job and goes away to avoid embarrassment for his son. The script, by the usual battery of Italian writers, draws this out a little too long, and Fabrizi's performance, in spite of many good moments, is

too weighty; but Castellani's direction, detached both in its irony and its sentiment, is continuously enjoyable.

Plus de Vacances pour le Bon Dieu

In the tradition of films like *Lone White Sail* and *Hue and Cry*, *Plus de Vacances pour le Bon Dieu* captures the adventurous spirit of childhood without patronising it. The "petits Poulbot"—poor Montmartre children who make thousands of francs by stealing dogs, then returning them to their owners and claiming a reward, and who find that their anonymous gifts to the needy are taken by the community (the priest included) as acts of God—are handled by Robert Vernay with freshness and humour. All the children play naturally, there is a charming sketch of an impoverished, never-married old couple by Pierre Larquey and Jane Morlet, and one can easily forgive the shoestring budget showing through.

ACTING

Philip Hope-Wallace

THREE BITS OF ACTING in recent films caught not only my eye but my curiosity; what sort of acting was it? There's that bellowing Marlon Brando in *The Men*. There's Gloria Swanson pulling tremendous faces in *Sunset Boulevard*. There's Miss de Havilland making the Oscars fly as *The Heiress* whom our Peggy Ashcroft so finely portrayed on the boards.

An operatic fanatic, I ought to uphold the rights of music in films. But I thought the music in *The Men*, a film much praised by the discerning for its honesty, nearly wrecked everything, especially the acting, such as it was. It is no use being sincere and clinical and unsentimental about paraplegia if the last word lies with your sound track and that sound track is meretricious and melodramatic. It's terrible enough when you have to go on documentary rambles chased by a tea shop quintet, but must one not really insist that piano concertos be kept out of hospital sequences? Here the wretched cripples can't take a bath, let alone fall out of their wheel chairs, without a crashing diminished seventh scored for trombones and half a dozen 'cellos!

I say that music in this film gravely handicapped what might have been—without it—much finer performances. Marlon Brando is a chief sufferer. He may not be everyone's idea of a nice young man, but as anyone who saw his stage performance in *A Streetcar Named Desire* in New York can testify, he is something of an actor, not merely a block to be photographed, passport style, with unwinking baleful bull's eyes, to a succession of clotted harmonies in the worst possible taste. Certainly music can be a powerful agent in a film, when well used. Think of *Now Voyager* for instance. But it will be a bad day for actors and everyone else if the idea obtains that films should consist simply of a series of baleful looks set to music. Perhaps after all, it is only Hollywood's revenge—or I should like to think so—for those ghastly operatic films from Italy through which we sit enduring the sound track while the camera-eye roves about trying to avoid staring straight at the seat of the shindy, which is to say the baritone's belly.

Marlon Brando, inarticulately, is capable of making those sudden and terrifying crescendoes of which many of our modern stage actors in Britain now seem incapable. (The other day in Vienna I heard Werner Krauss, sixty years old, simply lifting the roof when he let fly.) You may say that this has no place in the cinema equipped with its own methods of amplification, but I thought Brando showed in this film that it can still count. He plays the one scene where he is given scope—the bridal night quarrel—with real power. In the other good scene, the last explanation with the doctor, he is outplayed apparently by Everett Sloane, but whether that is Mr. Sloane's luck or talent it is hard to say, for the director's

interventions here are unfair. It would be good exercise deciding which actor in the scene is really the better.

In what I suppose it would now be absurd to term her heyday, Gloria Swanson never struck me as being a particularly good actress; not for example in the same class as Pola Negri. True, she had a face (as she says in *Sunset Boulevard*) and could give most speaking looks which would be effective even in the total silence which sometimes descended if the pianist took time off to rub her chilblains. But they never seemed to me very subtle speaking looks, seldom in fact imbued with the art of concealing art; in fine, generally self-conscious. In a way it is just this look of defiant self-consciousness which is the making of her portrait of an ageing movie queen in *Sunset Boulevard*. Not that I found the story or its treatment anything like as realistic as it was described in some quarters. The way that actresses age, and the way that actresses *think* that actresses age are very different things; however, this myth is no doubt truer than the usual myth of fame, failure and great art as Hollywood usually sees it.

Very generally the acclaim went to the last ten minutes in which Miss Swanson flamboyantly portrayed a flamboyant actress of the great school going out of her mind. I confess I was not won over by this, though it is just the kind of bravura turn which I relish if done to my liking. I confess to finding it unsubtle, heavy handed, with something of the touch of the tipsy fellow at a party who pretends to be a tiny bit tipsier than he really is. On the other hand much in the earlier scenes was finely managed, especially the scene played with closed eyes and bandaged hands pressed against her forehead, the scene in which she begged her embarrassed lover to go away, to let her die. Here she won through to a poise and precision which I found much more convincing than the display of big acting at the close.

In the bad old days one often used to see two consecutive films with the same character actor playing in both. No sooner had the cast list faded at the end of the first film than the name (sometimes greeted with a gasp) of the same player would re-appear in some other sort of role. This was in some indefinable way highly destructive of the cinematic realism: the price perhaps of the cinema's trick of bringing you so close to the characters. I think I must have seen all Olivia de Havilland's important screen performances; and all Peggy Ashcroft's major stage appearances. When Miss Ashcroft made her first entry at the Haymarket Theatre and began to exhibit all those agonisingly touching gaucheries in the part of Catherine, the heiress, I don't believe anyone said or thought 'O, Peggy Ashcroft, of course' or began to compare this performance step by step with her Viola or her Beatrice, or her Nina the Seagull. Yet how many people, seeing Miss de Havilland must have felt 'O, but she gave that look, or made that movement in *The Snake Pit*?' Acting for the stage is projection, something active. Acting for the cinema is submitting yourself to microscopic examination. Technically superb, helped at every step by an eloquent direction, Miss de Havilland's performance seemed to me to fail to impose total belief. She is *not* gauche, she is *not* dim, on the contrary a most capable, vivid person. The effort to suggest the dim spinster of Washington Square was worth every kind of prize for hard work but was just defeated because the *optique du théâtre* and the lens of the camera never quite see eye to eye about such things.

SCRIPTING

Penelope Houston

TWO RECENT HOLLYWOOD FILMS are distinguished by the remarkable performances of their stars, and by rather rare qualities of literacy, ingenuity, and cleverness in their scripts: the actresses are Gloria Swanson and Bette Davis, the films *Sunset Boulevard* and *All About Eve*. Both appeal to the intelligence rather than the emotions; both defy the general rule that the best screen dialogue is the simplest; their scripts could, I believe, be read with enjoyment, even divorced from their screen context. They have other points of similarity. Both were made by writer-directors—the Brackett-Wilder team and Joseph Mankiewicz—and it seems probable not only that the films reached the screen as first conceived, but that the original impetus was in each case that of the writing rather than the directing element in their creators. Finally both, by what in Hollywood is almost never a coincidence, deal with highly-coloured, grandiose stars of screen and stage.

The word most often used to describe *Sunset Boulevard* was “clever” and, by those who disliked the film “too clever”. It is the story of an ageing silent star, of her desperate attempts at a comeback, of her infatuation with a young writer, and of her collapse into insanity and murder when he tries to bring some reality into her pathetically deluded mind. On the surface, notably in the acid, literate, allusive dialogue, the script is all ingenuity. The picture of Hollywood on two levels—the outsize past and the workaday present—is achieved sometimes by direct illustration—Joe Gillis’ first impressions of the dilapidated mansion, the head-on clash of Norma Desmond’s visit to the studio—and sometimes by skilful use of contrast, such as that between Norma Desmond’s grand, doleful, solitary New Year’s Eve party and the crowded gaiety to which Gillis retreats. This is effective, economical screen-writing as, notably, is a brief scene in a shop. A salesman leaning towards Gillis in a grinning close-up murmurs “but if the lady’s paying” . . . the shot is held, as his position makes its first, full impact both on Gillis and on the audience.

But economy in detail does not, unfortunately, imply economy in the film as a whole. The bizarre, fascinating surroundings are no more than a background to the main theme, which is the study of a relationship. Brackett and Wilder, to their credit, have fended off the easy emotional appeal. *Sunset Boulevard* is moving only in one short scene: the star has attempted suicide, Gillis returns, full of pity, and the camera rests on the agonized, twisting bandaged hands. Apart from this, even the climax is written as a piece of horrifying bravura, a “wonderful scene” for the actress, rather than as the conclusion of a tragedy. The approach is throughout coldly analytical. But to analyse is essentially to develop a situation, and it is precisely here that the script fails. The scene is set, the characters introduced, and we should then be allowed to move in closer to them, to see them as individuals rather than as clever attitudes in the script writer’s mind. *Sunset Boulevard*, instead, dissipates its

energies; there are repetitive scenes between Gillis and the girl to whom he escapes; returns to Norma Desmond are made almost perfunctorily, the script writers labouring over points already made. What was dazzling has become familiar, the effect is dulled, and the last scenes, in consequence, tend to fall flat.

All About Eve falls neatly into the same trap. This film resembles a great shiny car, hung about with impressive, glittering gadgets; it is only when we approach very closely that we wonder whether there is after all an engine under the bonnet. It is told (as is *Sunset Boulevard*) by a narrator, although this time three people take over the chore, and is again in flashback. In both pictures, incidentally, the use of narrative is extremely expert and, for once, really adds to the film’s value.

A beautiful young actress is receiving the theatre’s highest award; *All About Eve* tells her story. As a stage-struck girl she is befriended by a middle-aged star, dominant, but fearing that her pedestal is toppling under her; she repays friendship with macchiavellian dishonesty, cheating and blackmail, until she finally meets her equal in a remarkably unscrupulous dramatic critic, who appreciates her manoeuvres but prevents her from doing her worst. The backbiting, sharp-shooting backstage world is conveyed by edged, intelligent character sketches (especially that of the star, Margo Channing and, although a shade over-done, of the critic) and by dialogue invariably clever and occasionally witty. The scheming woman plot is, essentially, old stuff, but Mankiewicz gives it an ingenious twist by enlisting sympathy so heavily on the side of Eve (in the film’s best scene in which she first meets Margo Channing) that the revelation of her intrigues makes its ironic impact.

But, unfortunately, the revelation cannot be delayed indefinitely. Once it comes, all further developments are predictable, and what is now needed is what the title promises—*All About Eve*. The broad sketch no longer suffices. The subject and the character are there, laid out flat and waiting to be assembled in the round, but Mankiewicz continues to prod and jab at it, to introduce clever, cynical, ultimately irrelevant little scenes. Above all, there is a split between two themes: Margo Channing (superbly played by Bette Davis) dominates every scene in which she appears, and Eve, who should have been at the film’s centre, gradually moves towards its circumference. *All About Eve*, too, is quite inordinately long, and could afford to lose forty of its hundred and forty minutes. This length, indeed, makes it apparent that Mankiewicz said as much in at least one of the half-hour sketches which made up *Letter to Three Wives* as he does in all this accomplished shadow boxing.

It is the virtues of these films—the surface gloss which makes them undeniably enjoyable to watch—that also reveal their defects. Ultimately the fault in each case is the same: the appearance of analysis without its substance. This is an all too common defect, especially apparent in those problem pictures which never quite convince because they retreat, eventually, into platitudes. *Sunset Boulevard* and *All About Eve* make their retreat into verbal ingenuity. The writers will go on like conjurors sawing a woman in half even after the audience has fathomed the trick and is ready to go home. It is a fault in construction. If, as I believe, the first quality of good screen writing is economy, then they are wasteful films, lavishing all that virtuoso writing on material which, in the last analysis, has not the strength to sustain it.

REVALUATIONS—8

Roger Manvell

The purpose of this series of reviews is to look again at films which have come to be regarded as "classics" in the history of the cinema. Although what matters to us here is their intrinsic value as motion pictures, their importance historically speaking will also be kept in mind. In addition, we shall give a summary of some past critical opinion on the film.

We hope this series of revaluations will be of use to film societies faced with the problem of preparing programme notes for their audiences, as well as of interest to all readers who like old as well as new films.

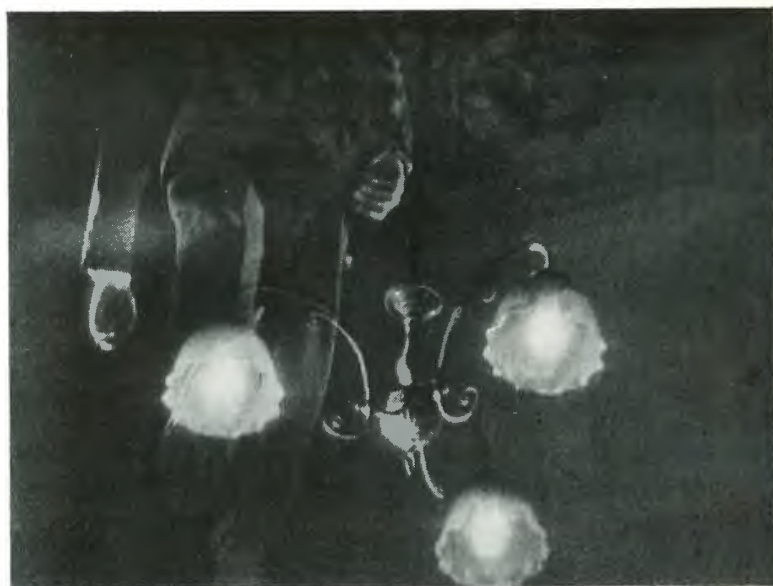
THE LODGER, 1927

Produced by Michael Balcon. Directed by Alfred Hitchcock. Screenplay by Alfred Hitchcock and Eliot Stannard, from the book by Mrs. Belloc Lowndes. Photographed by Hal Young. Edited by Ivor Montagu. With Ivor Novello, June, Malcolm Keen, Arthur Chesney and Marie Ault.

WHEN ANTHONY ASQUITH'S first film, *Shooting Stars* (1928), was discussed earlier in this series, I emphasised a point about these old films which applies even more strongly to *The Lodger*, Alfred Hitchcock's third film, made during 1926. This point was that a film registers coldly and exactly the taste and manners of its period, whereas a novel, however much it may be "of its time", undergoes a subtle re-interpretation and an imperceptible modernization in the imagination of a reader belonging to a later period. In just the same way a play is re-produced and re-orientated by stage artists of subsequent generations. Face me now with *The Lodger*, and I am hard put to it to explain how this film could be a great popular success at a time when I was often in the cinema myself, seeing films just like it, some better, most worse, and accepting them as a more or less fit and proper representation of life for the purposes of entertainment. The gap between Hitchcock's tenth film *Blackmail* (1929) and, for example, *The Blue Lamp* may seem very wide today, but that between *The Lodger* and *Gaslight*, to take a relatively recent film with a comparable story, seems immeasurable.

Any re-evaluation of *The Lodger* must take the nature of this gap into account. The story itself would be quite suitable for a contemporary thriller of the more lurid kind. A killer calling himself The Avenger is at large in London. His taste in victims is for blonde women. While the Press is exploiting his latest crime, the mother of a golden-haired girl (who is, incidentally, engaged to a detective working on the Avenger case) lets a spare room to a mysterious stranger. The script entices everyone both in the film and in the audience to suspect this man of being the Avenger, although in fact his interest in the murders is due to an entirely different cause.

The distinction between the handling of the melodrama in 1951 and in 1926 would, I claim, lie mostly in the kind of sensationalism which the screen offers to its patrons now, in contrast with that of twenty-five years ago. In *The Lodger* (1926) the characters go through a ritual of acting which is both stylised and genteel. For example, while the detective (played by Malcolm Keen) makes love in the basement-



"The Lodger". Entry of the mysterious stranger: footsteps at night in the rented room: listening landlord (Arthur Chesney)



"His youth and vigour will pull him through". Ivor Novello

kitchen to the golden-haired girl (played by June) by stamping out heart-shaped cakes of dough on a pastry-board, a build-up of shots of sinister shadows cast on the street-door above (No. 13) leads on to a further shot of the Suspect (Ivor Novello), young, pale, and staring wide-eyed into the camera as the door is opened to him. He is masked by a scarf slung across the lower part of his face. With every movement timed in slow-motion, he unmask himself, taking off his scarf and hat. His face looks weary and even somewhat spiritual, but his head alerts as he hears the laughter of the golden-haired girl below-stairs. Then he turns his attention to the walls of the room he is to rent, and everywhere he looks he finds the framed portraits of blonde damsels, the Victoriana of the magazine art-supplement. One, two, three we get the shots of his posed horror, the last with a shadow arranged horizontally across his eyes. He clenches his fist with a despairing gesture. When the landlady's daughter enters with his milk, he eyes her in a well registered shot which bodes all the more obvious kinds of evil.

There is, indeed, a very whimsical air about *The Lodger*. With an audacity which can only be excused on the grounds of considerable theatrical licence, Mrs. Bunting, the landlady, lets her daughter, Daisy, play chess alone upstairs with the mysterious paying-guest, and there is some very sinister by-play with a poker. "Providence is concerned with sterner things than money, Mrs. Bunting", says the Suspect to Daisy's mother, later on, while the detective downstairs crooks his fingers in the arm-holes of his waistcoat and says, with every sign of satisfaction, "When I've put a rope around the Avenger's neck, I'll put a ring round Daisy's finger". (It must be said that the manners of the young policeman are in very bad taste throughout his courtship, and that he loses his girl in the end.)

But as the story proceeds the whimsy develops. Suspicion closes in upon the pale young Suspect, and he finds himself escaping through the bitter night-wind with the detective's handcuffs round his wrists. Only Daisy believes in him, and finds him shivering coatless in the shadows, haunting the place where the Avenger committed his last murder. Then he tells her of an oath he gave to his mother on her death-bed, and she realises that he is not only innocent, but noble as well. "Keep your handcuffs hidden, and we'll get some brandy", she says. But the angry crowds find him and pursue him with



The murder of the chorus girl

the relentless energy of a mob bent on blood. Finally, he hangs by his handcuffs from a railing, while the crowd kick and beat him. But the detective, with proof of his innocence, rushes to deliver him; his limp body is taken down reverently from the railings, and carried to hospital. "His youth and vigour will pull him through", they say, and he ends up with Daisy in a baronial hall. There is some polite joke about a toothbrush to bring the thing to a happy end.

All this sounds and is very distant from Hitchcock's later style, a style which is fully apparent in *Blackmail*, but scarcely to be found in *The Lodger*. Lindsay Anderson, on the other hand, finds the seeds of Hitchcock's future work in this film. He writes:

"Considered in relation to Hitchcock's subsequent career, *The Lodger* is particularly interesting. Its realistic settings, its lower-middle class locale (presented without any false glamour) are those which were to form the background to Hitchcock's famous series of melodramas in the thirties. Most, indeed, of the later films' ingredients are here; the ingenious visual touches, the acute and sometimes caustic observation, the imaginative economical style, the long build-up of suspense, the climactic violence. In all these *The Lodger* pointed forward to its director's great future".

I agree that these elements are there when they are searched for, but they do not form an emphatic part of the film's treatment, as they do in *Blackmail*. That is the greatest point of interest in comparing these two early films by a man who was to contribute so much to the realistic treatment now regarded as a necessary quality of most screen fiction.

But I have still not answered the question why a film like *The Lodger* was so acceptable to the public in its day. I do not think that the silent film, although it was photographic, was expected by its popular audiences to reconstruct the scenes and situations of real life as the sound film is expected to today. The silent film offered you a fancy world, impressive but remote, the genuinely realistic films (*Birth of a Nation*, *Potemkin*, *Drifters*, etc.) were outstanding because they were so exceptional. The silent images normally belonged to the fantasy of sentiment or of melodrama, and occasionally they produced their own genuine poetry. Their measure was not that of the street outside or the crime columns of real newspapers; they derived mostly from the vagaries of lady novelists, or from the ingenious imaginings of the creators of haunted houses.

BOOK REVIEWS

SPOTLIGHT ON FILMS by Egon Larsen. (Max Parrish, 15/-).

AS MR. LARSEN'S BOOK aims "to put everything worth knowing about the film between two covers", the reader is encouraged to judge it by the highest standards. According to the blurb, "Spotlight on Films" is the "first comprehensive handbook" and has three sections: "the story of the development of the film as an art", "the course of present-day film making through all its fascinating stages", and, quaintly phrased, "the mutual influence of the film on mankind and vice versa in various countries". This is obviously not just a scissors-and-paste job. For such a book the polymath must not only convince us of his exhaustive knowledge of all the historical and technical details, but also of the subtlety, maturity and precision of his critical and factual analyses. Mr. Larsen is not the man for the post.

Most of Mr. Larsen's examples of the development of the film are pedagogic clichés now; the repetition of "knife" in *Blackmail* or the distortion of the waltz theme in *Carnet de Bal*. He is at least on safe ground here, but when he comes to the later, less anthologised films he almost disappears in the critical swamp from which he struggles to extricate himself with vague and baffling rubrics. Ben Hecht's *Spectre of the Rose* is "an original and effective mixture of irony and tenderness, virility and psychological insight, centred on the figure of a mad ballet dancer". Thorold Dickinson's *Gaslight* (1940) is reviewed as the successor to various American psychological films, including *Lady in the Dark*, *The Lost Weekend* and *The Snake Pit*, all of which were made several years later. *Strange Incident* (1943) is treated as one of a Hollywood "cycle", between *Our Daily Bread* (1934) and *Blockade* (1938). *Le Corbeau* is dismissed as crude pro-German propaganda, *L'Eternel Retour* is of course "Wagnerian" and unhealthy, while *Les Visiteurs du Soir* comes in "striking contrast to this essentially un-French film (the negation of life and glorification of death is hardly a French characteristic) . . . a refreshing affirmation that the spirit of the French film had not yet been extinguished by the occupiers"! Previously, Vigo's *Zéro de Conduite* and *L'Atalante* (the latter described as "the thwarted romance of a barge skipper on the Seine") have been placed as "too uneven and unbalanced to count as masterpieces". Inaccuracies apart, the writer's dislikes are usually illogical and vulgarly expressed, and his praise a sort of ghost criticism, a grammatical line upon which an occasional nebulous hoorah-word is pegged.

When he deals with films the reader has not seen, Mr. Larsen's lack of critical equipment is even more embarrassing. His description of the high-spot of Alexandrov's *Circus*, a Soviet colour-bar film, sounds like a parody. "The actual message is conveyed in a magnificent musical scene: the little negro baby is handed by the audience right round the vast circus while the orchestra plays a lullaby and a dozen or more people representing as many races of the Soviet Union sing the words in their respective languages".

On the whole Mr. Larsen's memory seems good, and though there is no bibliography and no reference to standard works in the index, he seems to have read them with attention. How else can he account for these two entries for the *New Yorker's* Funny Coincidence Dept.?

"Commonplaces we are supposed to agree: that wealth is all you need in life, that luxury in connection with women is normal, that men's normal full-time occupation is the pursuit of women, that the normal way of settling disputes for an ordinary man is a punch on the jaw, that brainless patriotism is better than national self-criticism, all foreigners are silly or suspect".

a. wealth in the abstract is a good thing. b. luxury especially associated with women is normal. c. that the fulltime pursuit of women . . . is normal. k. a sock on the jaw is an honest man's answer. p. brainless patriotism is preferable to national self-criticism. q. to be foreign is to be under suspicion"

The quotation on the left is from Egon Larsen's *Spotlight on Films* (1950, p. 278), the one on the right from Roger Manvell's *Film* (1944, p. 167). There is also another coincidence on p. 99 where Mr. Larsen's description of the opening shot of *Song of Ceylon* looks like Graham Greene's description, quoted by Manvell on p. 99. It becomes quite creepy, eventually.

The second section of the book, "From First Idea to First Night", shows Mr. Larsen has not wasted his weeks of Mass Observation at Ealing Studios. He plays Boswell at script conference, there are interesting illustrations of an editing sequence from *Hue and Cry* (though it is never discussed or analysed), and his own photograph of Margaret Lockwood being given "a dropped eyelid of fish skin and plastic wax" has a macabre fascination. While six of these three hundred pages are devoted to how to submit a script ("Don't submit a morbid story") and three and a half to make-up, there is hardly a reference to the contribution of the photography to the finished product. Mr. Larsen has the familiar middlebrow's idea of the role of the camera, as can be seen in this jocular aside: "As Director of Photography, in spite of his modern title, is still camera man, his passion is camera angles, i.e., unusual ones which make the critics sit up and take note of the photographic quality of the film". There are several involved diagrams showing how the Independent Frame method operates, but no details of the use of lighting to convey atmosphere or heighten dramatic tension. The only comment is, "roughly speaking comedy will require bright and gay lighting effects, a drama 'lowkey' effects and a spine chiller needs uncanny shadows". Make yourself an aesthetic out of that if you can, he seems to say.

In his third section Mr. Larsen gives up the struggle. We never learn about the "mutual influence of the film on mankind and vice versa in various countries". There are a few anecdotes about negroes in the cinema, one or two statistical crumbs from Wollenberg's table, a puff for film societies and some shadow-boxing around "what is a good film"—"To us, the Film is an Art—with all that it has ever meant for human beings".

The best I can say for *Spotlight on Films* is that it has some unusual stills.

ALAN BRIEN

THREE BRITISH SCREENPLAYS: *Brief Encounter*, *Odd Man Out*, *Scott of the Antarctic*. Edited by Roger Manvell. Foreword by Frank Launder. (Methuen, 10/6.)

THE MARKET FOR published film scripts in this country is probably uncertain, and this edition of *Three British Screen-*

plays is as courageous as well as an enterprising move. One hopes it will get the support it deserves: "the published screenplay," Roger Manvell writes in his introduction, "must always be read with the visual picture in the reader's mind," and the screenplays chosen are of films that anybody who buys the book will recently have seen. *Odd Man Out* is the most substantial and remarkable of the three films, and it is the only screenplay printed "as it was given initially to the actors and film technicians". *Brief Encounter* and *Scott of the Antarctic* are presented as post-production scripts, with camera movement and the breakdown of shots "described generally, rather than indicated particularly".

Odd Man Out's screenplay (by R. C. Sheriff and F. L. Green) closely reflects the virtues and defects of the film itself, and is one of the examples on which Howard Koch wins his arguments on points. The keeling over, with the beginning of the Robert Newton sequences, into a fantasy out of keeping with the earlier part, is of course heightened by the visual style and decor of the scenes in Lukey's studio; but even this is ordained in the description of the setting in the script. In *Brief Encounter*, however, the director comes into his own. The emphasis here is primarily on the dialogue, and perhaps the script pin-points the film's deficiencies at the expense of its stylistic compensations—the skill and fluency of David Lean's direction, and the outstanding quality of Celia Johnson's performance. The dialogue in itself is undeniably corrupted by the kind of theatrical mannerisms that betray Noel Coward when he ventures out of artificial comedy, and the railway buffet scenes are conventional enough caricature. David Lean and Celia Johnson between them managed to infuse into the film an emotional truth that survives—partially, at least—the novelettish elements in the writing. It is quite possible to imagine *Brief Encounter*, with a less sensitive player and director but exactly the same script, emerging as a rather insufferably superior *Woman's Own* film.

So here it is not a question, as Howard Koch has put it, of the director enriching "the action that was preconceived in the script by his meticulous attention to every detail of the production" (which is Mr. Koch's definition of the creative role of the director), but of a superior sensibility and perception being brought to the original material.

The style of *Scott of the Antarctic*, the book makes plain, derives directly from the script, which is conscientious but uninspired. An exacting subject, not only because of its scope but because of the difficulty of characterising people still alive, or with close relatives still living, one can think of few directors in any country who could prove equal to it.

The introduction promises us (if the present volume meets with success) further collections of screenplays, including translations of foreign language ones. The value of such a project, *Three British Screenplays* tangibly makes plain.

JAMES MORGAN

TELEVISION

ONE OF THE difficulties of the regular reviewer of radio or television is that if he leads a normal life he cannot possibly see every programme broadcast; he can only pick samples, as it were, from the bran tub. And this month, ten days abroad have caused me to miss more than usual. What is perhaps surprising is the number of items I have managed to see nevertheless.

Television variety seems to be taking a slightly upward

turn. I remember at least one programme which proved indisputably that if one juggling act is breath-taking, four in a row can be infinite boredom, but *Kaleidoscope* is always entertaining, and *The Top Hat* programme of December 9th (with Jack Jackson, Johnny Lockwood and Arthur Askey) was above the normal level of its type. I personally am not a fan of Petula Clark; her compass may grow but at present it is too limited to that of the suburban teen-ager. Despite this, I find the easy, intimate atmosphere of her new programme, *Pet's Parlour*, more agreeable than I am willing to admit.

On December 4th, Ronnie Waldman made the courageous experiment of inviting five leading television critics to produce their own variety programme, and then to discuss it afterwards. Considered individually, the turns selected were well above average (I was particularly grateful for a repeat of Norman Wisdom's brilliant sketch) but, considered as a whole, the programme was entirely ordinary. Neither in their programme-building, nor in their discussion afterwards (both hampered, one gathers, by lack of time) did the critics touch on what I am convinced is the chief problem of television variety in the present small-screen stage; namely, getting away as often as possible from the dancing girls and artificial boisterousness of the large-scale presentation towards the homely intimacy of *Pet's Parlour* and *Kaleidoscope*.

In the *News* (the Friday night free-for-all discussion between four politicians) is undoubtedly the most stimulating programme of the week, and infinitely better and more worthwhile than the Brains Trust used to be even in its hey-day. Current political problems are discussed by W. J. Brown, Robert Boothby, Michael Foot, Dingle Foot, A. J. P. Taylor and their like with an admirable mixture of freedom, seriousness and good humour. It was characteristic of the vigour and resilience of this team that on December 8th, in this age when even the biggest political figures are accustomed to read from the typed page, they should have launched into a full and free discussion of the Truman-Attlee communiqué within fifteen minutes' of its first announcement in the nine o'clock news.

Another regular programme of a different kind which always comes over extremely well is the television magazine, *London Town*, in which Richard Dimbleby introduces us to curious features of work-a-day London. Here again, it seems to me, it is the intimate personal touch of Dimbleby himself which gives this programme its peculiar quality; it is not so much that we learn new things about London, as that we tag along with a rather agreeable companion. I hope, however, that he will keep to the documentary line, and not again abandon us, as he did for one scene on December 8th, to a costumed reproduction of the past (from which he himself is necessarily excluded). This is out of key and a mistake.

I have seen only three television dramas since reporting on *Richard III*. The most enjoyable was the first, Priestley's *Time and the Conways*. Having regard to the limitations within which the producer has to work, Harold Clayton's handling of the first act struck me as particularly brilliant. By well-directed movement of both actors and cameras he managed to create a sense of party bustle and excitement, and of activity extending beyond the studio walls. *The Enemy of the People* was not improved by the rearrangements which had been made for the television version; and I do not know whether I completely missed the point of Bridie's *Jonah*, but I must confess I found it most tedious.

I cannot end without a brief tribute to *Ballet for Beginners*, in particular to the extraordinary skill with which Felicity

Gray presents her material. Her purpose is as undeviatingly didactic as the dullest university extension lecture, and it is achieved with such charm, lucidity and variety of apt illustration as to make it a model of its kind which should be studied by everyone interested in visual education. One hopes that television will not stop giving us occasional programmes of this kind.

ERNEST LINDGREN

THE SOUND TRACK

MICHAEL POWELL'S APPROACH to film music has always been unconventional, ever since he used Sir Hugh Robertson and the Glasgow Orpheus Choir in *The Edge of the World*. The score to the film was by Lambert Williamson, at that time a newcomer to the cinema world. In *49th Parallel* he took the bold step of making Ralph Vaughan Williams into a film composer at the age of seventy, while in *One of Our Aircraft is Missing* he took the equally bold one of making a film without any music at all. *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp* utilised, notably, a "hot" number by Allan Gray as a motif for a Home Guard exercise, beautifully cut to music in the documentary style. *A Canterbury Tale* had another Allan Gray jazz piece, and the Bach Toccata and Fugue in D Minor for the cathedral sequence. *I Know Where I'm Going* saw a return of the Glasgow Choir, which Gray incorporated into his score.

A Matter of Life and Death was full of ethereal effects; a piano playing scales with woodwind accompaniment provided an effective theme for the heavenly escalator sequences. Brian Easdale arrived with *Black Narcissus*, and later won a musical Academy Award with his music for *The Red Shoes*. While *Gone to Earth* does not offer the same opportunities, the scoring is musically as ingenious as anything he has done.

Four weeks were taken to record the music for *Tales of Hoffman*. The day before Sir Thomas Beecham began the recordings, it was found that, although Offenbach was safely out of copyright, the libretto was far from it. A new man had to be called in to re-write the entire book day-by-day, and the singers had to learn a completely fresh set of words each morning before the recording began. Sir Thomas's energetic direction carried through a very difficult technical feat and gave Ted Drake, the music recordist of *Red Shoes*, *Hamlet*, *Henry V*, *Oliver Twist* and *Prelude to Fame*, one of his most complex tasks.

One is reminded of the recording sessions on *The Red Shoes*. It was Sir Thomas Beecham's first appearance in a film studio since he had recorded the music for a film about Mozart in 1936, and the first day's recording was scheduled to take place at Denham. On the morning in question, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra went to the Music Recording Theatre at Denham but Sir Thomas went to Pinewood Studios, about three miles away. Next day, the session had to be transferred to Pinewood. The orchestra was there at nine-thirty, but the conductor went to Denham. On the third day, the orchestra and the conductor were finally assembled in the same place at the same time, except for the four horn players who went to Shepperton!

Madame Martenot came over from France with the Ondes Musicales, an electronic instrument used by Honegger in his *Jeanne D'Arc* and in the Bartosch film *L'Idée*. When this elaborate device was first plugged into the studio power

supply, it promptly blew all the fuses; when the voltage was eventually regulated to suit its requirements a number of fascinating sounds were obtained for the ballet sequence.

Whatever the collective assessment of Powell's films may be, they also offer a good deal of stylish interest, of which not a little may be located on the sound track.

JOHN HUNTLEY

Index of Recordings from Michael Powell Films

1. *The Edge of the World*. "The Last Walk" (Lambert Williamson). Decca K.1579.
2. *49th Parallel*. "Prelude" (Ralph Vaughan Williams). H.M.V. B.9879.
3. *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp*. "Commando Patrol" (Allan Gray). Decca F.8364.
4. *A Matter of Life and Death*. "Prelude" (Allan Gray). Columbia DX.1320.
5. *The Red Shoes*. "Prelude" and "The Ballet of the Red Shoes". (Brian Easdale). Columbia DX. 1597-98.

SHORTER NOTICE

FILM PRODUCTION AND MANAGEMENT, by Sir Michael Balcon (British Institute of Management, 2/6)

Sir Michael Balcon's paper for the British Institute of Management is a straightforward business man's guide to some of the problems which arise in studio organization. He points out the distinction between film production and other manufacturing (art or business), gives a list of studio personnel with their functions (with the usual distinction between producer and director), and briefly summarizes the industrial relationships within the studio. The major problem, of course, is production costs: Sir Michael states that the daily cost of the average film, while in production, is about £2,000 (slightly confusing, since he earlier suggests that wasted minutes are likely to add up to as much as £2,000 a day), and describes briefly some of Ealing studios, cost-cutting methods. The most notable of these are the "Two Unit" method of production—involving the use of a second director to shoot certain scenes—and the Mobile Studio Unit, which makes it possible to economize by producing films (such as *Whisky Galore*) almost entirely on location, through the setting up of a make-shift studio on the spot. Although the scope of the paper is necessarily restricted to generalisations, it provides a useful, simple summary of production technique from the management angle.

CORRESPONDENCE

Irish Censorship

The Editor, SIGHT AND SOUND

Dear Sir,

Let it be said at the outset that Irish censorship, both formal and oblique, is strict, stupid and pernicious; functioning as it does on the somewhat sweeping assumption that, if one takes care of the ethics, the aesthetics will take care of themselves. Theoretically at least this is a splendid dictum to work on. But, in practice, it has appalling results. By it, for instance, *Brief Encounter* (of all films) was banned here; because it said *the thing that was not*. This, unfortunately, was not the theme of attempted adultery, but the unbearably honest treatment afforded it.

Because he is sincere himself the Irish Censor has great respect for sincerity: in films he usually pays it the compliment of trying to keep it out (*vide*, *Brief Encounter* and the attempted banning of *Sunset Boulevard*). He has an unholy fear of films that take their immorality seriously; and is no longer only a short step away from attempting to foreclose on *all* films that take themselves seriously. As a rule he judges a film, not on the treatment of its theme, but rather on the soundness of its orthodoxy. And, rather than stand accused sometime of compromising, has hit upon the ingenious idea of banning (but for the grace of God and the Appeal Board) all the very bad films *and* all the very good ones.

As the former outnumber the latter by a terrible total one should,

perhaps, feel grateful to him for this. But those interested in the film proper—and some do exist, even in Ireland—can hardly be expected to feel sympathetically towards him.

Then, of course, there is the sobering fact of an almost unqualified lack of responsible film criticism here. Like the Dodo, apparently, such things as Irish Film Critics do not exist. The only possible aspirant to that proud title writes for a morning paper with a circulation well below the rest. He is unique in his profession—in this country at least—in being both educated and well-read. Unfortunately however he is damned also in being painfully undogmatic. And an undogmatic film critic, as you know, is about as effective as a masseur with a single finger on each hand.

All the films booked in Dublin have come, almost without exception, via London. With the result that there is no pioneering in formal criticism here. The quality films have already obtained their plaudits from Dilys Powell; the horrible ones have already been sneered at by *Sequence* or bludgeoned by Winnington. The Irish film critic (let's call him that) is like a dog who eats someone else's vomit.

His attitude to films might best be described as romantic rather than enthusiastic. He is painfully conscious of his duty as protector of adolescent morals. His watch-word is the Sanctity of the Family. Without fear or favour he would have wished upon us all good clean Clifton Webbish comedy on familiar lines. (That *Sitting Pretty*, *Father of the Bride*, *Life with Father*, etc., etc., should be popular in Dublin would seem to say that the horrid creature has a public.) His archaic gods are Hitchcock and John Ford; no other directors exist.

Dublin, surely, is a terrible example of a film-critic-less City. The case of *Sequence* redeeming *They Live by Night*, or the Academy redeeming it and *The Window*, or that of *A Letter from an Unknown Woman* would all be quite, quite unthinkable here.

Possibly adopting their tactics from the unfortunate example of the ageing Censor, the Cinema Managers have flatly refused to book either *The Queen of Spades* or *Louisiana Story*, on the score that they were "not box-office". (Of course they did book *Louisa*: and a confidant of mine promised to book *The Grapes of Wrath*—but rather unfortunately died the week after. I'm not sure if there was a connection.) Borzage's exquisite *Moonrise*, evidently not thought quite up to the grind glass, was contemptuously flung to the hogs at a Sunday session in a suburban third-run cinema. It has now disappeared, possibly for ever, down the gloomy interior of the Renters' hell. The omission to book Dickinson's film—as Flaherty's—does not, indeed, bear commenting upon. I have seen neither of these films myself. That not one of the ersatz-critics should make any comment whatsoever on this insolent deprivation was, of course, only to be expected.

And that *Crossfire*, when shown at one of the Universities, should be howled down (evidently the well-bred students considered being a little unorthodox like *that* was an affront to the tried and accepted *status quo*) was only in the nature of things also.

But the best thing I have kept till last; it is perhaps the most comprehensive indictment of the real position of Cinema in Dublin. Know then that the Astor was a specialised cinema in Dublin—oh,

maybe five-seven years ago—showing with great aplomb a *rara avis* like Welles' *Magnificent Ambersons*. Well, what do you suppose it is to-day? An ice-cream parlour... AN ICE-CREAM PARLOUR!!!

Yours faithfully,
AIDAN HIGGINS

COMPETITION

Competition No. 9. Film Clichés. There are some lines of dialogue that recur monotonously in various kinds of films. For instance, in the romantic film:

"Can you ever forgive me?"

"But, darling, there is nothing to forgive".

In the historical film:

"Who is that rude young man who plays the piano so badly?"

"That is Frederic Chopin".

In the melodrama:

"Yes, I killed him—and I'm glad, I tell you, glad, glad, *glad!*"

Competitors are invited to send in three examples of their own remembered film clichés. Usual prizes to the ripest. Closing date January 25th.

Report on No. 7. "Famous First Words". There were three equally good entries for this competition, so a prize of a 10/6d. book token goes to each of the first three printed below. Honourable mentions follow. A number of amusing entries had to be disqualified as they presupposed an impossible precocity.

JEAN COCTEAU: "Je suis comme je suis, maman!"

ANNA NEAGLE: "Can I dress up like grandma?"

CHARLES CHAPLIN: "...!" He opened his little mouth, but he could not express himself, and he went toddling off into the distance. (D. R. MIDDLETON.)

CAROL REED: "Faster, Nanny! We're being followed!"

MARLENE DIETRICH: "But surely, mother, I ought to be able to do something!"

CHARLES CHAPLIN: "()"
(LESLIE D. GLAZER.)

VON STROHEIM: "No, you will cut *nothing*, Doctor".

JEAN COCTEAU: "Bon jour, mes parents terribles".

ERROL FLYNN: "See here, I demand a blood test".
(ALAN BRIEN.)

MARLENE DIETRICH: "Look at my funny little legs".
(BERNARD COOK.)

ORSON WELLES: "Rosebud!" (P. A. JAGGARD.)

ORSON WELLES: "Nanny, you do look nice from the top of the staircase". (R. H. LAWRENCE.)

JEAN COCTEAU: "A quoi sert un miroir, maman?" (R. F. SPILLER.)

ANNA NEAGLE: "Look, Ma, I'm acting". (EDWIN H. ALGAR.)

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EDITORIAL AND PUBLISHING OFFICES: British Film Institute, 164 Shaftesbury Avenue, W.C.2. (Temple Bar 1642.)

SIGHT AND SOUND is sent free every month to members of the Institute: annual subscription rate (12 issues), 2ls. including postage.

EDITOR: Gavin Lambert

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PRINTED BY M^cCorquodale & Co. Ltd., London, England.

BLOCKS BY W. F. Sedgwick, Ltd., London

ADVERTISING OFFICES: Husey & Co., 92 Fleet Street, E.C.4. (Central 8209.)

SIGHT AND SOUND'S GUIDE TO CURRENT FILMS

Brief Pointers to the principal films showing in British cinemas during January. Last-minute changes of programme after our press-date may cause one or two inaccuracies (chiefly in the London area) but we hope this list may serve as a useful general guide. Films with an asterisk are particularly recommended.

BORN TO BE BAD (R.K.O.). Joan Fontaine as a refined adventuress: routine deceits, triangle, and come-uppance. (Robert Ryan, Zachary Scott: director, Nicholas Ray.)

***CINDERELLA** (R.K.O.). The first full-length Disney fairy tale for some time: charming animal characters, a teen-age heroine and prince, and on the whole very enjoyable.

***CITY LIGHTS** (United Artists). Reissue of one of Chaplin's greatest films (1931): the story of a tramp, an eccentric millionaire and a blind flower girl, told with humour and intense pathos. (Chaplin, Virginia Cherrill, Harry Myers: written and directed by Chaplin.)

***CRISIS** (M.G.M.). Topical and interesting melodrama about a doctor forced to operate on a power-mad Latin American dictator, and his crisis of conscience. (Cary Grant, Jose Ferrer, Signe Hasso: director, Richard Brooks.)

***DOMENICA D'AGOSTO** (Film Traders). The lives of rich and poor contrasted and entwined one afternoon on a Roman pleasure beach: a little diffuse, a little too slight, but fresh, gay and lively. (Anna Baldini, Umbarto Spadaro: director, Luciano Emmer.)

ELUSIVE PIMPERNEL, The (British Lion). Lavish technicolor version of the Orczy legend, lacking in spirit and excitement. (David Niven, Margaret Leighton, Cyril Cusack: directors, Powell and Pressburger.)

FLAME AND THE ARROW (Warners). High-spirited cloak and sword adventures set in medieval Lombardy: many acrobatic stunts, no pretence of period accuracy, and quite good fun. (Burt Lancaster, Virginia Mayo: director, Jacques Tourneur.)

HA'PENNY BREEZE (A.B.P.). The revival of a Suffolk village: fresh location charm, a shaky script, and an example of the independent spirit. (Don Sharp, Edwin Richfield, Gwyneth Vaughan: director, Frank Worth.)

HARRIET CRAIG (Columbia). An engineer has a psychotic wife, and does not discover the extent of her possessive machinations until the last reel. Dreary. (Joan Crawford, Wendell Corey: director, Vincent Sherman.)

HARVEY (G.F.D.). Screen version of the play about a man who imagines himself to be accompanied everywhere by a white rabbit six feet tall: whimsy retained, but charm lost in transit. (James Stewart, Josephine Hull: director, Henry Koster.)

HIGHLY DANGEROUS (G.F.D.). Margaret Lockwood as an entomologist sent behind the Iron Curtain to discover secrets of germ warfare. Improbable. (Dane Clark, Marius Goring: director, Roy Baker.)

***IF YOU FEEL LIKE SINGING** (M.G.M.). Judy Garland and Gene Kelly in fine form in a gay but patchy musical about the arrival at a country farmhouse of a troupe of actors. (Eddie Bracken: director, Charles Walters.)

I SHALL RETURN (Fox). Guerilla warfare in the Philippines: a conventional adventure story sadly mishandled in all departments. (Tyronne Power, Micheline Prele: director, Fritz Lang.)

JOFROI (G.C.T.). Marcel Pagnol adapted, brother René directed, this 1933 version of a Jean Giono story about an old peasant prepared to die for his useless fruit trees. The slender material requires more style than it gets here. (Vincent Scotto, Henri Poupon.)

KING SOLOMON'S MINES (M.G.M.). Large-scale account of safari in Africa: Rider Haggard story, wild animals, local Technicolor. (Stewart Granger, Deborah Kerr: director, Compton Bennett.)

LILLI MARLENE (Monarch). Highly fictitious story centred on famous song, whose singer is kidnapped from North Africa by the Germans, forced to broadcast from Berlin, but actually sings code messages for the British secret service. Simple stuff. (Lisa Daniely, Hugh McDermott: director, Arthur Crabtree.)

MANON (Grand National). Clouzot's modern, very freely adapted version of *Manon Lescaut*: occasionally brilliant, generally flashy, intermittently censored. (Michel Auclair, Cecile Aubry, Serge Reggiani.)

MUDLARK, The (Fox). Apocryphal story of a little urchin who breaks into Windsor Castle to see Queen Victoria, and is instrumental in bringing her out of her widowed retirement. A lighter touch sorely needed. (Irene Dunne, Alec Guinness, Andrew Ray: director, Jean Negulesco.)

MYSTERY SUBMARINE (G.F.D.). A secret agent, a kidnapped atom scientist, and a German submarine at large: barely adequate adventure story. (Macdonald Carey, Marta Toren: director, Douglas Sirk.)

SAMSON AND DELILAH (Paramount). De Mille's long, large, terribly vulgar and vaguely biblical Technicolor saga. (Victor Mature, Heddy Lamarr.)

SECRET FURY, The (R.K.O.). Actor Mel Ferrer's debut as director: unlikely story of female pianist framed for murder and madness. (Claudette Colbert, Robert Ryan.)

SEPTEMBER AFFAIR (Paramount). Novelettish story of the not so brief encounter of a pianist and an engineer; set in lush Italian backgrounds (Joan Fontaine, Joseph Cotten, Francoise Rosay: director, William Dieterle.)

THREE SECRETS (Warners). A plane crashes on Thunder Mountain, and three different women have reason to believe that the surviving child is their illegitimate son. Medium class tear-jerker. (Eleanor Parker, Ruth Roman, Patricia Neal: director, Robert Wise.)

TOAST OF NEW ORLEANS, The (M.G.M.). Back-opera romance of a New Orleans soprano and a tenor off the Bayou. Routine musical in pleasant Technicolor. (Kathryn Grayson, Mario Lanza: director, Norman Taurog.)

TWO WEEKS WITH LOVE (M.G.M.). Technicolor musical about a family summer holiday in the early 1900's: mildly entertaining. (Jane Powell, Ricardo Montalban: director, Roy Rowland.)

***UNDEFEATED, The** (G.F.D.). The plight of legless British war veterans, in parts over-generalised in the usual sponsored documentary way, but also with some sequences in which the director shows a rare tact and feeling. (With Gerald Pearson: director, Paul Dickson.)

UNION STATION (Paramount). Murder and blackmail in and under Los Angeles Union Station: tough, moderately exciting thriller. (William Holden, Nancy Olsen: director, Rudy Mate.)

***VIE COMMENCE DEMAÎN, La** (Blue Ribbon). A young man interviews Sartre, Le Corbusier, Rostand, Gide and others on the subject of the Future. A bold, partially successful experiment. (Jean-Pierre Aumont: director, Nicole Vedres.)

WALK SOFTLY, STRANGER (R.K.O.). Melodrama of a gambler reformed by pure love. (Valli, Joseph Cotten: director, Robert Stevens.)

WHERE DANGER LIVES (R.K.O.). Mad husband-killer inveigles concussed doctor into flight across America. Unrewarding. (Robert Mitchum, Faith Domergue: director, John Farrow.)

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Published by
THE CINEMA PRESS LTD.,
93/95 WARDOUR STREET
LONDON, W.1